

## CHAPTER 4

# ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

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#### **4.A. Introduction**

This chapter describes the potential direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental (both positive and negative) on elements of the human environment from actions proposed in Chapter 2 of this National Monument Management Plan. Cumulative impacts are the effects on the environment of each proposed alternative when considered with the effects of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions that might occur inside and/or adjacent to the National Monument. This chapter is organized by environmental element, followed by a description and comparison of potential impacts from the relevant proposed management strategies/actions, which are described in detail in Chapter 2 “Alternatives and Strategies”.

Alternative D, the “No Action” alternative, is the current management strategy which is in accordance with the management direction provided for in BLM California Desert Conservation Area Plan (1980, most recently amended 2002) and the San Bernardino National Forest Plan (1989) for the lands within the bounds of the National Monument and is used as a baseline from which to compare the other alternatives. As a result of Alternative D being within the guidance of approved management plans and legislative requirements, only a cursory analysis of the effects of implementing Alternative D is provided. In addition, since many management actions proposed in this plan are consistent with direction from approved plans and the National Monument Act of 2000, only a cursory analysis of the effects of implementing many of the strategies is provided. By referencing current plans, mitigation strategies developed in response to any potentially significant environmental impacts identified in any relevant plan will be applied as relevant within this Management Plan.

#### **Analysis Assumptions and Guidelines**

The following assumptions and guidelines were used to guide and direct the analysis of environmental consequences:

- 1) The population surrounding the National Monument is likely to double over the next twenty years. The Coachella Valley will continue to develop as a tourism-based economy with demand for recreation likely to increase.
- 2) Multiple factors affect the Peninsular Ranges bighorn sheep population, resulting in rise and fall of the population. This analysis focuses on impacts resulting from human use factors which affect Peninsular Ranges bighorn sheep.
- 3) This analysis assumes compliance with the existing Biological Opinion for the BLM Coachella Valley California Desert Conservation Area Plan Amendment (2002) and the most recent Biological Opinion established for the San Bernardino National Forest.
- 4) Existing Best Management Practices, Habitat Conservation Objectives, Land Health Standards and Forest Service Standards and Guidelines (Appendix E) are common to all action alternatives and are incorporated into the analysis.
- 5) Site specific NEPA analysis including required surveys would be accomplished before implementation of activities in the proposed alternatives.
- 6) This analysis does not analyze any proposed actions associated with other ongoing planning processes. Only proposed actions presented in Chapter 2 are analyzed.

#### **4.B. Potential Impacts to Resources**

##### **4.B.1. Impacts to Air Quality**

Air quality is an issue of regional concern in the National Monument planning area. In addition to the discussions and assessments set forth in this section, refer to the Coachella Valley CDCA Plan Amendment for a more detailed discussion of BLM's air quality management strategy, a summary of the Coachella Valley PM10 State Implementation Plan, and an air quality conformity analysis and determination for BLM lands within the National Monument Planning Area (Appendix I.) An equivalent air quality management strategy for Forest Service land within the National Monument will be addressed through the San Bernardino National Forest Plan Revision (in progress.) No actions proposed through this plan are expected to exceed allowable PM10 levels

##### **Biological Resources – Habitat Management – Management of Noxious, Non-native, and Invasive Plant Species**

###### **Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)**

It is anticipated that the management and control of the spread of non-native, noxious weeds, and invasive species and the reintroduction of indigenous species would not have an adverse impact on air quality.

###### **No Action Alternative (D)**

Actions by the Tamarisk Task Force for the eradication of tamarisk would not have an adverse impact on air quality.

##### **Biological Resources – Management of Special Species**

###### **Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)**

Coordinating with partner agencies to inventory plant and animal species within the National Monument would not have an adverse impact on air quality. Coordinating to promote consistency and effectiveness of recovery efforts at sand dunes and sand fields would result in more effective sand fencing to minimize sand flow from these areas and to reduce PM 10 emissions. Coordinating recovery efforts in other habitats would better protect vegetative cover and limit habitat and soil disturbance, thus reducing negative air quality impacts.

###### **No Action Alternative (D)**

Inventory for plant and animal species on a project specific basis would not have an adverse impact on air quality. Current recovery efforts would result in sand fencing to minimize sand flow from sand dunes and sand fields and would reduce PM 10 emissions. Current recovery efforts in other habitats would provide vegetative cover and limit habitat and soil disturbance but probably not to the extent of Alternative A.

##### **Biological Resources – Monitoring Program**

###### **Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)**

Actions under these Alternatives associated with monitoring Biological Resources would not increase adverse impacts on air quality.

###### **No Action Alternative (D)**

Current actions associated with monitoring would provide no adverse impact to air quality

##### **Cultural Resources Strategy – Including Research and Inventory**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Identifying, monitoring and protecting cultural resources as describe in these alternatives would not impact air quality.

No Action Alternative (D)

Current management of cultural resources would not negatively affect air quality

**Recreation Resources - Strategic Recreation Management Plan**  
(Alternative A, B, and C)

All alternatives provide for the development of a Strategic Recreation Plan, incorporating decisions from a trails plan for the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains (pending). The alternatives also provide for the establishment of a monitoring program to assess impacts of recreation on other resources. This would likely preserve habitat, vegetative cover, and preclude incompatible development. These actions would enhance long-term protection of regional air quality.

No Action Alternative (D)

Recreation management for trails occurs on an as-needed, case-by-case basis on BLM-managed lands. As such, future actions would be evaluated to determine if there were any potential impacts to air quality.

**Recreational Resources – Hang Gliding, Recreational Paintball, Pacific Crest Scenic Trail, Recreational Shooting, Pets, Feral and Uncontrolled Domestic Animals**

No impacts to air quality would occur as a result of the Preferred Plan or No Action Alternative for the above listed recreation activities.

**Recreational Resources - Forest Service Adventure Pass**  
Preferred Plan (Alternative A and B).

The removal of the requirement for an Adventure Pass to be displayed in vehicles parking on Forest Service Roads within the National Monument may result in a slight increase in the number of vehicles traveling on the 16.2 miles of Forest Service roads that are within the National Monument. This is not anticipated to provide any adverse impacts to regional air quality or impact the relative amount of PM10 emissions because of the limited number of roads and parking areas to be affected.

Alternative C

Requiring a permit for all vehicles that are parked on both BLM and Forest Service lands is not anticipated to provide any impact to regional air quality because less than 3 miles of road would be affected

No Action Alternative (D)

No impact to air quality would occur as a result of the No Action Alternative.

**Geological Resources Strategy –Including Inventory and Mapping, Protection and Preservation, etc.**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Coordinating with partner agencies to complete a 3<sup>rd</sup> order soil survey for non-mapped portions of the National Monument would result in better long-term management of soil resources and would provide for enhanced air quality management and erosion management. Education through interpretation would limit surface disturbance of

sensitive geologic resources and would reduce amount of dust from soil disturbing activities.

No Action Alternative (D)

No impact to air quality would occur as a result of the No Action Alternative. Future projects on BLM-managed lands would be subject to environmental review per the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, the Clean Air Act, State Implementation Plans for improving air quality, conformance to the National Ambient Air Quality Standards, and conformance with the air quality management strategy outlined in the Coachella Valley CDCA Plan Amendment.

**Educational Resources Strategy – Including Public Information, Signage, Education and Interpretation**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Public Information efforts and Education and Interpretation programs could increase vehicular traffic in the National Monument. The relative amount of PM<sub>10</sub> emissions generated by motorized vehicles depends on the velocity of the vehicle and prevailing wind speeds. Due to the relatively small amount of Forest Service and BLM roads open for motorized travel (18.2 miles) within the National Monument, this strategy would not adversely impact regional air quality. Increased signage would also deter future off-road travel and would therefore limit future adverse impacts to air quality from those illegally traveling off-road in motorized vehicles.

No Action Alternative (D)

No change in impact to air quality would occur as a result of the No Action Alternative. Future projects on federally managed lands would be subject to environmental review per NEPA, the Clean Air Act, State Implementation Plans for improving air quality, conformance to the National Ambient Air Quality Standards, and conformance with the air quality management strategy outlined in the Coachella Valley CDCA Plan Amendment.

**Management of Scientific Resources**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Facilitating the transfer of research information to the public through periodic science forums would increase regional knowledge of potential impacts to air quality throughout the National Monument. Development of a research permit would increase the ability of BLM and Forest Service to better manage potentially soil disturbing activities and would increase the two agencies abilities to cooperatively manage for increased air quality.

No Action Alternative (D)

No impact to air quality would occur as a result of the No Action Alternative. Future projects on federally managed lands would be subject to environmental review per NEPA, the Clean Air Act, State Implementation Plans for improving air quality, conformance to the National Ambient Air Quality Standards, and conformance with the air quality management strategy outlined in the Coachella Valley CDCA Plan Amendment.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities and Uses – Access**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

No impact to air quality would occur as a result of the Preferred Plan or the No Action Alternative. Future projects on federally managed lands would be subject to

environmental review per NEPA, the Clean Air Act, State Implementation Plans for improving air quality, conformance to the National Ambient Air Quality Standards, and conformance with the air quality management strategy outlined in the Coachella Valley CDCA Plan Amendment.

#### **Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Private Property Concerns**

##### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Increasing Forest Service and BLM contact with adjoining private property owners provides an opportunity to educate local landowners, to become better informed about local land uses, about air quality concerns and provides an opportunity for coordinated management. This would increase the current air quality management approach by extending suggested management actions to neighboring communities.

##### No Action Alternative (D)

No impact to air quality would occur as a result of the No Action Alternative. Future projects on federally managed lands would be subject to environmental review per NEPA, the Clean Air Act, State Implementation Plans for improving air quality, conformance to the National Ambient Air Quality Standards, and conformance with the air quality management strategy outlined in the Coachella Valley CDCA Plan Amendment.

#### **Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses –Facility Development**

##### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Prioritizing facility development in already disturbed areas would limit surface disturbing activities and limit the production of dust. This would limit future adverse impacts to regional air quality.

##### No Action Alternative (D)

Future projects on BLM- and Forest Service-managed lands would be subject to environmental review per the NEPA, the Clean Air Act, State Implementation Plans for improving air quality, conformance to the National Ambient Air Quality Standards, and conformance with the air quality management strategy outlined in the Coachella Valley CDCA Plan Amendment.

#### **Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Visitor Use with Regard to Hwy 74**

##### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Coordinating with Caltrans regarding management of Highway 74 would increase the effectiveness with which increasing vehicular traffic could be managed and would increase the effectiveness of Caltrans, Forest Service, and BLM in managing regional air quality. Thus, there would be no negative impacts to air quality.

##### No Action Alternative (D)

No impact to air quality would occur as a result of the No Action Alternative.

#### **Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Monitoring Visitor Use**

##### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

No impact to air quality would occur as a result of the Preferred Plan or the No Action Alternative.

#### **Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Hazards to Facility, Visitor and Public Safety**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

No impact to air quality would occur as a result of the Preferred Plan or the No Action Alternative.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Fire Plan**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Coordination among agencies responsible for fire management would increase the effectiveness of regional air quality management, or management across jurisdictional boundaries.

No Action Alternative (D)

No impact to air quality would occur as a result of the No Action Alternative. The implementation of these fire management strategies, or management in accordance with the CDCA Plan, BLM District-wide Fire Management Plan, and San Bernardino National Forest Plan is not expected to have an adverse impact on regional air quality. Any prescribed burning must be conducted in consultation with the South Coast Air Quality Management District in order to minimize potential adverse impacts.

**Water Resources - Surface and Ground Water Resources**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Efforts to inventory and monitor water sources and quality are not expected to have an adverse impact on air quality

No Action Alternative (D)

No impact to air quality would occur as a result of the No Action Alternative.

**Acquisition Strategy – Acquisition Criteria**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

The Preferred Plan would establish criteria by which the appropriateness of proposed acquisition of BLM lands would be judged. Subsequent actions to conserve these special areas would reduce air emissions from the public lands. Such actions would preserve habitat and associated vegetation cover, and preclude incompatible development.

No Action Alternative (D)

No impact to air quality would occur as a result of the No Action Alternative.

**Adaptive Management and Monitoring Program – Implementing the Plan**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Methods outlined for plan implementation would benefit regional air quality by increasing the effectiveness and efficiency with which air quality management activities are implemented within the National Monument.

No Action Alternative (D)

No impact to air quality would occur as a result of the No Action Alternative.

**4.B.2. Impacts to Cultural Resources/Native American Concerns**

The BLM and Forest Service are required to consult with recognized Tribal governments with jurisdiction over Indian Trust Resources affected by proposed actions. Consultation activities are described in Chapter 5.B. of this document. Any potential impacts to Indian Trust Resources were addressed through consultation with local Tribes and impacts are

outlined below

**Biological Resources – Habitat Management – Management of Noxious, Non-native, and Invasive Plant Species**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

The occurrence of non-native plants, noxious weeds, and invasive species is one factor related to the decline in the availability of plants specifically used by Native American traditional practitioners. For example, fountain grass competes with deer grass, which is used in traditional basketry. Removal of non-native, noxious weeds, and invasive species and reintroduction of indigenous species would have a positive effect on Native American concerns by increasing the availability of plants used traditionally for basketry, medicine, ceremonial practices, and food.

Mechanical removal of non-native, noxious weeds, and invasive species could result in damage to cultural resources. Adverse effects to historic properties would be analyzed in compliance with NEPA and Section 106 of the NHPA. Adverse effects would be avoided where feasible and mitigated as necessary.

No Action Alternative (D)

The No Action Alternative would have no impact on Native American concerns.

**Biological Resources – Management of Special Species**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

No impact to cultural resources or Native American concerns.

No Action Alternative (D)

No impact to cultural resources or Native American concerns.

**Biological Resources – Monitoring Program**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

No impact to cultural resources or Native American concerns.

No Action Alternative (D)

No impact to cultural resources or Native American concerns.

**Cultural Resources Strategy – Including Research, Inventory, etc.**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

The cultural resources strategy would have a positive effect on Native American concerns and cultural resources. The strategy outlines a proactive approach to identification, evaluation, protection and preservation of cultural resources. The strategy also provides for on-going consultation with the Cahuilla Bands and facilitates access to traditional ceremonial, ancestral, and collecting/gathering locations. Any cultural resource research activities may require further consultation with SHPO, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and Native American Tribes.

No Action Alternative (D)

The potential for effects to historic properties from specific federal undertakings would be analyzed as required by NEPA and the NHPA. Consultation with the Cahuilla would be conducted as required by NEPA and the NHPA and as described at 36 CFR 800, Forest Service Manual 1563 and BLM Manual 8160. Consultation would be tied to specific



undertakings. Access to ceremonial or sacred areas will be accommodated as directed by Executive Order 13007.

### **Recreation Resources - Strategic Recreation Management Plan**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

No impact to cultural resources or Native American concerns.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

No impact to cultural resources or Native American concerns.

### **Recreational Resources – Hang Gliding**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative B), Alternative A, and C

The BLM and Forest Service would identify places where hang gliding would be appropriate. The presence of significant cultural resources would be considered in making these decisions. Hang gliding would have no impact to cultural resources or Native American concerns.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

Cahuilla Bands have expressed concerns about unregulated recreational use of the National Monument. It has not been demonstrated that hang gliding specifically threatens cultural resources within the National Monument as few areas within the National Monument are suitable for hang gliding.

### **Recreational Resources – Recreational Paintball**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C.)

Use of archaeological features and sites as “fortifications” has occurred on BLM lands in northern California. Under these circumstances paintball has the potential to cause a negative impact on cultural resources. The potential impacts include displaced or broken artifacts and damage to or defacement of features from trampling and paint.

These types of negative impacts would be avoided if paintball were not allowed within the National Monument.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

Allowing recreational paintball to occur within the National Monument would have a negative impact on cultural resources.

Cahuilla Bands have expressed concerns about unregulated recreational use of the National Monument. Allowing paintball to occur in areas of cultural sensitivity would have a negative impact on cultural resources and on Native American concerns.

### **Recreational Resources – Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (PCT)**

#### Alternative A, B, and C.

No impact to cultural resources or Native American concerns, since increased coordination with PCTA and partners would not negatively impact cultural resources found within the 500 foot wide corridor.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

No impact to cultural resources or Native American concerns.

### **Recreational Resources – Recreational Shooting**

Preferred Plan (Alternative C)

The potential for negative impacts to cultural resources from firearms would be decreased if recreational shooting were not allowed within the National Monument. Negative impacts to rock art panels could occur if hunters used them for targets.

(Alternative A, B and No Action (D))

Recreational shooters are known to use glass or other breakable materials for targets. Participants also fail to collect spent shells. Both of these actions have the potential to deposit intrusive materials into archaeological sites.

Damage to rock art panels occurs when they are used for targets. This practice has been documented on public lands, but not within the boundaries of the National Monument.

**Recreational Resources – Pets - Within Essential Bighorn Sheep Habitat**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

No impact to cultural resources or Native American concerns.

**Recreational Resources – Pets- Outside Essential Bighorn Sheep Habitat**

Preferred Plan (Alternative B), Alternative A,C, and No Action (D)

No impact to cultural resources or Native American concerns.

**Recreational Resources – Feral and Uncontrolled Domestic**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

No impact to cultural resources or Native American concerns.

**Recreational Resources - Forest Service Adventure Pass**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A and B)

Cahuilla Bands have expressed concern about access to the National Monument for the purposes of collecting traditional plants and materials and for visiting ancestral or ceremonial sites. There would be a positive impact to Native American concerns if Native Americans were not required to secure an Adventure Pass prior to accessing National Monument lands. A potential negative impact may result by additional visitors accessing lands without the chance for educating them (via a permit) prior to accessing land. This impact would be minimal in that current distribution of the Adventure Pass is not accompanied by cultural resource information; however, it removes the opportunity to use this as a vehicle for education in the future.

Alternative C

Requirement of an Adventure Pass for parking on BLM and Forest Service land would have a negative impact on Native American concerns. The policy would impose a fee on those who desire to access public lands for ceremonial purposes, collecting and gathering of materials, or visiting ancestral sites. The distribution of the permit could provide a benefit to cultural resources in the future if it were to be accompanied with educational materials regarding recreational use that is compatible with protection of cultural resources information in the National Monument

No Action Alternative (D)

There would be no impact to Native American concerns on BLM and Forest Service managed lands.

**Geological Resources Strategy –Including Inventory and Mapping, Protection and Preservation, etc.**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

No impact to cultural resources or Native American concerns.

**Educational Resources Strategy – Including Public Information, Signage, Education and Interpretation**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Cahuilla Bands have expressed concern for potential impacts to culturally sensitive areas as a result of increased visitation and for trespass from National Monument lands onto reservation lands. A proactive public information that emphasizes the need for visitors to be aware of and respect the private property within and adjacent to National Monument lands would have a positive impact on Native American concerns.

Cahuilla Bands have commented on the need for an educational program that would foster respect for their lands, resources, and traditions. Native Americans groups have also expressed a concern for unregulated recreational use. The use of brochures, newsletters and other informational tools would address these concerns.

In addition, cultural resources themselves are a fragile and irreplaceable resource. The development of tools to educate the public on ways to minimize resource damage would have a positive impact on both Native American concerns and cultural resources.

No Action Alternative (D)

The potential for inadvertent damage to cultural resources from recreational users would continue at current levels. Cahuilla concerns for trespass and impacts from recreation would not be addressed.

**Management of Scientific Resources**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Currently no effort has been made to publicize the potential for cultural resources research within the National Monument. Support of research regarding cultural resources and impacts to those resources would have a positive impact on cultural resources by augmenting the efforts of BLM and Forest Service staff.

No Action Alternative (D)

No impact to cultural resources or Native American concerns.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities and Uses – Access Across Private Property**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

No impact to cultural resources or Native American concerns would result from this strategy because assessments would accompany future actions. Adverse effects to historic properties would be analyzed in compliance with NEPA and Section 106 of the NHPA. Adverse effects would be avoided where feasible and mitigated as necessary.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Private Property Concerns**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

No impact to cultural resources or Native American concerns would result from the proposed strategy or from the No Action because this strategy focuses on improving relationships with local private landowners.

### **Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Facility Development**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

The impacts to cultural resources and Native American concerns from construction of new facilities would be analyzed as required by NEPA, the NHPA, and other applicable laws and implementing regulation.

### **Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Visitor Use with Regard to Hwy 74**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

No impact to cultural resources or Native American concerns.

### **Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Monitoring Visitor Use**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

The impacts of visitation on cultural resources and Native American concerns cannot be fully analyzed without knowledge of levels and patterns of visitor use. Monitoring visitor use would have a positive impact on cultural resources by identifying areas of high usage which warrant increased protection, enforcement, and monitoring. Cultural resource management actions such as site monitoring, site stabilization, and analysis of user impacts could then be focused on high use areas.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

No impact to cultural resources or Native American concerns.

### **Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Hazards to Facility, Visitor and Public Safety**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

The proposed alternative outlines the need for a defensible structures map for the National Monument. This would protect those cultural resources that consist of structures or other properties that could be adversely affected by hazardous situations.

No culturally sensitive locations or properties would be identified on this map. Protection of these sites would instead be provided by close coordination between emergency response teams and National Monument cultural resources staff.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

No impact to cultural resources or Native American concerns.

### **Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Fire Plan**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

No impact to cultural resources or Native American concerns. Specific actions would be analyzed as directed by NEPA and Section 106 of the NHPA.

### **Water Resources - Surface and Ground Water Resources**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

No impact to cultural resources or Native American concerns.

### **Acquisition Strategy - Acquisition Criteria**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Cultural resources would benefit if these resources were recognized as an important factor in decisions regarding acquisition of lands. Cultural resources and Native American concerns should be weighed heavily as a factor in deciding the strategic significance imparted to parcels desired for acquisition. Specific areas within the

National Monument have been identified by the BLM as representing a high priority for acquisition based on known cultural resource density and sensitivity. Cultural resources staff and Native American input into the process of identifying lands with significant resource values would have a positive impact on both cultural resources and Native American concerns.

No Action Alternative (D)

The CDCA Plan states that private or state lands within areas designated as sensitive or unique in that Plan will require acquisition through exchange or purchase, unless the management of those resources is assured by another appropriate agency or entity. Areas exist within the National Monument which are known to contain significant cultural resources values.

**Adaptive Management and Monitoring Program – Implementing the Plan**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

The adaptive management and monitoring strategy will have a positive impact on cultural resources and Native American concerns by encouraging citizen, volunteer organization, and Tribal involvement in monitoring. Members of the public as well as Cahuilla Tribal members have expressed interest in participating in a stewardship program to monitor archaeological sites within the National Monument. Members of the Cahuilla Bands have provided information that indicates specific archaeological sites have been damaged by looting. Site stewardship programs have been shown to have a protective effect to threatened sites.

Coordination between agencies and development of cooperative agreements with non-profit organizations and user groups will make the best use of and supplement limited staff resources.

No Action Alternative (D)

Negative impacts to cultural resources would continue until funding for monitoring and management became available.

**4.B.3. Biological Resources - Impacts to Habitat, Fish and Wildlife, Special Status Animals, and Vegetation**

**Biological Resources – Habitat Management – Management of Noxious, Non-native and Invasive Plant Species**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

The proposed preferred alternative would benefit all biological species in the National Monument, providing a comprehensive inventory of non-native species and an action plan for eradication and control. Invasive plant species impact wildlife water sources, out-compete native vegetation, and degrade riparian areas. Coordination of these activities with local agencies and tribes would increase effectiveness of control efforts across multiple jurisdictions. Ground-truthing of aerial photos may impact sensitive species if conducted during the breeding or lambing seasons. A programmatic environmental assessment describing impacts from mechanical and chemical eradication methods would be completed prior to implementing control actions. In addition, a ESA section 7 consultation would be completed to ensure that adverse effects to listed species are avoided or minimized. The preferred alternative would provide for better coordination and information sharing among agencies, resulting in a comprehensive, landscape level approach to non-native plant management. Control efforts would be prioritized depending on location and impacts to special status species.

In addition, annual reporting to partners and the public would provide accountability of control efforts.

No Action Alternative (D)

Current BLM and Forest Service efforts to control non-native, invasive plant species are coordinated with local agencies and the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians. In addition, the Forest Service has a National noxious weed management plan that has not been implemented due to lack of weed-free vendors in the local area. Current management provides a positive impact to biological species, vegetation management, and habitat management.

**Biological Resources –Wildlife Management: Special Status Species**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

The preferred alternative would result in a comprehensive inventory of plant and animal species on the National Monument. This inventory would be conducted using existing databases, published literature, and other sources. The resulting information would be used as an environmental baseline to evaluate changes in plant and animal populations and distribution over time. In addition, the preferred plan would streamline effects analysis for future proposed projects and consultation with partners, tribes, and agencies such as the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Current knowledge of habitat use and distribution patterns is critical for effective monitoring. BLM and Forest Service would collaborate with researchers, local agencies and jurisdictions to ensure that management actions will promote effective management of special status species and help prevent additional listings in the future. The preferred alternative would enable BLM and Forest Service to conduct plant and animal inventories across the National Monument to determine distribution and habitat use and would expedite project analyses and facilitate research permits and authorizations of projects.

No Action Alternative (D)

Under current BLM and Forest Service land use plans, inventories for plants and animals are conducted on a project-specific basis. There are many areas of the National Monument that have not been inventoried or surveyed to date. No adverse impacts to management of special status species would result from the No Action alternative.

**Biological Resources – Monitoring**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

The preferred alternative would result in the development of an interagency monitoring plan, including local cities, wildlife agencies, researchers and universities. Monitoring efforts would focus on special status species to evaluate changes in distribution over time. Collaboration with local agencies, cities, etc., would increase effectiveness and coverage of monitoring. Preparation of annual reports would provide accountability of monitoring efforts to partners and the public. Monitoring for changes in populations and distribution over time would enable managers to adjust management actions if necessary.

No Action Alternative (D)

Current monitoring described in the CDCA Plan (1980 as amended) and the Forest Service SBNF Management Plan (1989) would continue on a project-specific basis only, as implementation of terms and conditions of biological opinions and conservation management objectives. The adverse impact to biological species management from the No Action approach is the lack of an integrated, landscape level approach.

### **Cultural Resources Strategy – Including Research, Inventory, etc.**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Inventory, monitoring, and preservation of cultural resources could cause temporary disturbance to wildlife species, depending on season. Activities conducted outside of lambing or nesting seasons would likely have no effect on special status species. Activities conducted during the spring may temporarily displace wildlife. Interpretation and outreach programs would benefit plants and animals on the National Monument by providing a broader context for the public to understand the importance of these resources to early inhabitants of the mountains and the Coachella Valley. Developing a policy for traditional uses may impact special status species, depending on the extent, location and seasonality of traditional uses. In addition, cultural resource protection activities may impact current management activities such as grazing and recreation. Actions would be coordinated with permittees to minimize disturbance to authorized activities. A traditional use policy within the National Monument (basket weaving plant collection) would impact management activities such as grazing, depending upon the location and extent of the traditional use.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

Under the No Action Alternative, cultural resource work would occur on a project-specific basis. Impacts to plants and animals would be evaluated case-by-case.

### **Recreation Resources - Strategic Recreation Plan**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Under the preferred alternative, a Strategic Recreation Plan would be initiated within one year of completing the National Monument Plan. Decisions made in the trails plan for the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains (pending) would be incorporated into this plan. Impacts to wildlife within essential bighorn sheep habitat are being described in the trails plan for the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains (pending). The Strategic Recreation Plan would be subject to Section 7 consultation, pursuant to the Endangered Species Act and 50 CFR Part 402. Impacts to listed plants and animals would be addressed at that time.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

Recreation management would continue as provided under the CDCA Plan (1980 as amended) and the Forest Service SBNF Plan (1989).

### **Recreation Resources – Hang Gliding**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative B)

Under Alternative B, hang gliding launching and landing on Federal managed lands within and adjacent to essential bighorn habitat in the National Monument, including Vista Point, would not be allowed (Figure 6). The impacts described below (Alternative A) would be avoided completely in bighorn sheep habitat but may occur elsewhere on the National Monument if hang gliding launches and landings were allowed.

#### (Alternative A)

Under Alternative A, hang gliding launches and landings on BLM and Forest Service lands within the National Monument, including the Vista Point launch site on Highway 74, would be allowed with a permit, subject to management measures to minimize occurrences of landing in sensitive areas. There is a dearth of published information regarding the impacts of hang gliding on wildlife. A single study, published in 1994

(Zeitler and Georgii) examined the effects of hang gliding and paragliding on wildlife. The authors indicated that in areas that are regularly overflowed by both hang gliders and other aircraft, animals remained unaffected by the disturbance. After two years of study, there was no indication of harm to wildlife. The authors recommended that launch and landing sites be designated in areas less sensitive to wildlife and that flying activities should be controlled during sensitive seasons, i.e., breeding seasons. In addition, the height of the gliding seemed to cause some disturbance to bald eagles nesting nearby and the recommended distance from known nesting sites is 1200-1600 meters. The authors also reported red deer fleeing when hang gliders attempted to gain height by circling over an area. Males were less likely to flee than females regardless of the time of year. In the Peninsular Ranges, BLM and Forest Service have reduced disturbance to bighorn sheep during the bighorn sheep lambing and rearing season to help facilitate recovery of the population. To be consistent with this approach, permits issued would be subject to mitigation and avoidance measures intended to reduce disturbance to bighorn sheep and other wildlife species.

#### Alternative C

Under Alternative C, hang gliding launches and landings on BLM and Forest Service land within the National Monument would be prohibited. This would avoid any and all impacts related to this use.

#### Alternative D – No Action

Under current BLM and Forest Service management, hang gliding would continue to be allowed. The impacts described above in Alternative A could occur if this activity was allowed unregulated.

### **Recreation Resources – Recreational Paintball**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, C)

Under the preferred alternative, gas or air-propelled weapons or simulated weapons (including paintball and paintball-like weapons) would be prohibited on BLM and Forest Service land within the National Monument. This prohibition would ensure that no resource damage occurs from this type of activity, such as, damage to plants and potentially to wildlife. In places where paintball recreation is allowed, damage to resources is evident. Paint is splattered across surfaces of plants and rocks, paintball capsules left on the ground, vegetation and rocks rearranged to provide targets and courses for play. This alternative would ensure that these activities do not occur within the National Monument. This would provide a positive impact to biological resources.

#### Alternative D – No Action

Current management by BLM and Forest Service does not prohibit paintball recreation activities within the National Monument. Resource damage may occur from this type of activity, such as, damage to plants and potentially to wildlife. Adverse damage to biological resources is evident in other locations where paintball is allowed. Paint is splattered across surfaces of plants and rocks, paintball capsules are left on the ground, vegetation and rocks are rearranged to provide targets and courses for play. Allowing paintball within the National Monument would result in adverse impact to biological resources.

### **Recreation Resources – Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (PCT)**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, C)



The preferred alternative would establish a 500-foot wide management corridor encompassing the Pacific Crest Trail. This would only enhance coordination and communication with the Pacific Crest Trail Association (PCTA) to ensure that recreational values are considered when management actions are proposed on BLM or Forest Service lands. Impacts from management actions on biological resources would be evaluated as projects are proposed. ESA Section 7 consultations would be conducted as needed for federally listed threatened and endangered species.

#### Alternative D – No Action

The Pacific Crest Trail would continue to be managed in accordance with the existing management plan. An existing Memorandum of Understanding among BLM, Forest Service, and the PCTA addressing coordination of management activities in place. Impacts from management actions on biological resources would be evaluated as projects are proposed. Section 7 consultations would be conducted as needed for federally listed threatened and endangered species.

### **Recreation Resources - Recreational Shooting**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative C)

Prohibition of shooting would result in no recreational shooting related impacts to wildlife species within the National Monument. Shooting associated with hunting would continue to occur. Hunting is regulated by the California Department of Fish and Game. Impacts of hunting on wildlife species are released by the Department of Fish and Game in their annual Environmental Assessments.

#### Alternative A

Recreational shooting would be permitted within designated shooting areas within the National Monument. No shooting would be permitted in the designated State Game Refuges (Figure 7). Impacts to wildlife occupying habitat adjacent to designated shooting areas may include disruption of feeding, breeding, or resting, temporary or permanent habitat displacement, and direct mortality from shooters. Effects of shooting could be monitored at designated sites to evaluate impacts of noise, human presence, and lead to wildlife over time. Designations of shooting areas would help minimize illegally dumped items often used for targets. Designations of shooting areas would be subject to NEPA and ESA section 7 consultations under the Endangered Species Act.

Hunting would continue to occur and is regulated by the California Department of Fish and Game. Impacts of hunting on wildlife species are released by the Department in their annual Environmental Assessments.

#### Alternative B

Dispersed recreational shooting would potentially impact wildlife species less than designated areas because disturbance would not be constant in one location, thus reducing the likelihood of permanent habitat displacement. Conversely, effects of dispersed recreational shooting would be more difficult to monitor and impacts to wildlife species over time may be greater, but go undetected. No dispersed shooting would be allowed within the State Game Refuges (Figure 7), designated wilderness (Figure 4), where vehicle access has not been approved, or within 150 yards of all developed recreational facilities and occupied sites (e.g. roads, trails, Visitor Centers, campgrounds, trailheads, etc.).

Dispersed shooting may lead to increased trash dumping (objects used as shooting targets), which in turn may result in ground water contamination and other environmental hazards. The accumulation of lead in the environment has not been fully analyzed but has known negative effects on wildlife species. By designating shooting areas, lead would be concentrated in one area and people would be required to pick up shell casings and other garbage.

Hunting would continue to occur and is regulated by the California Department of Fish and Game. Impacts of hunting on wildlife species are released by the Department in their annual Environmental Assessments.

No Action Alternative (D)

Under current plans (CDCA 1980 – as amended, Forest Service SBNF 1989) recreational shooting is allowed everywhere except at developed sites and within 150 yards of developed sites, respectively. Impacts to wildlife may occur wherever shooting occurs, including direct mortality, injury, and disturbance, which may result in temporary or permanent habitat displacement. Current dispersed shooting may lead to increased trash dumping (objects used as shooting targets) and the accumulation of lead in the environment has not been fully analyzed but has known negative effects on wildlife species.

Hunting is regulated by the California Department of Fish and Game. Impacts of hunting on wildlife species are released by the Department in their annual Environmental Assessments.

**Recreation Resources – Pets - Within Essential Bighorn Sheep Habitat**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, C)

Under the Preferred Plan, parking areas, visitor centers, and other developed sites may be designated as areas where pets are allowed. No such sites have been identified at this time and would require NEPA and Section 7 endangered species consultation prior to designation.

(Alternative D – No Action)

Under the No Action Alternative, pets would be managed at parking areas, visitor centers, and other areas consistent with the CDCA Plan Amendment for the Coachella Valley, including interim management prohibiting dogs on BLM lands east of Palm Canyon (with exceptions) currently in place pending completion of a trails management plan. This alternative would defer all dog area decisions to a trails management plan and impacts would be described therein.

**Recreational Resources – Pets- Outside Essential Bighorn Sheep Habitat**

Preferred Plan (Alternative B)

Alternative B would allow pets on all Federal lands within the National Monument outside of essential bighorn sheep habitat (Figure 6) with a leash required (maximum 10-feet). Owners would be required to collect and properly dispose of any waste produced by their pet. Working dogs may be permitted on Federal lands pursuant to use authorizations. Under this alternative, it would be expected that wildlife would not be subject to harassment and chasing described under Alternative A. Dogs would be leashed which would reduce interactions between wildlife and pet recreation, while allowing working dogs as part of permitted authorization.

#### Alternative A

Outside essential bighorn sheep habitat, pets would be allowed on all Federal lands within the National Monument and outside essential bighorn sheep habitat with no leash required. Owners would be required to collect and properly dispose of any waste produced by their pet. Working dogs may be permitted on Federal lands pursuant to use authorizations. This alternative would provide no protection for wildlife species, other than bighorn sheep, from being chased or harassed by dogs. Domestic pets are known predators of wildlife. Cats and dogs chase and kill small mammals and ground birds. Dogs impact wildlife by 1) marking territories, 2) chasing wildlife, and 3) killing small animals. Lack of control (leash) of pets within the National Monument would negatively impact wildlife species.

#### Alternative C

Alternative C would allow pets only on paved surfaces and in designated pet areas at developed facilities *outside* essential bighorn sheep habitat (Figure 6). Leashes (maximum 10-feet) would be required. Developed facilities would include visitor centers, trailheads, parking lots, and campgrounds. Owners would be required to collect and properly dispose of any waste produced by their pet. Working dogs may be permitted on Federal lands pursuant to use authorizations. Impacts from pets to wildlife or vegetation would be restricted to wildlife and vegetation directly around or adjacent to these areas. Enforcement of leash regulations would help ensure that wildlife was not harassed or chased by dogs.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

Areas outside essential bighorn sheep habitat (Figure 6) would be open to pets on both BLM and Forest Service lands within the National Monument. Impacts to plants and animals may include destruction of plants and harassment and/or harm to wildlife. In addition, increased distribution of dogs across Federal land may increase the probability that some dogs will become lost and subsequently turn feral, thus increasing the current feral dog problem on the National Monument.

### **Recreation Resources – Feral and Uncontrolled Domestic Animals**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Under the Preferred Alternative, BLM and Forest Service would establish a protocol, in cooperation with Riverside County, California Department of Fish and Game, and local cities, to address feral and uncontrolled domestic animals. This would enable BLM and Forest Service to respond quickly and effectively to feral and uncontrolled domestic animals, which have a huge impact on wildlife. Domestic cats kill hundreds of millions of birds each year (USFWS 2002). A study in Wisconsin revealed that domestic cats were responsible for 39 million avian deaths in one year (USFWS 2002).

#### (Alternative D – No Action Alternative)

BLM and Forest Service currently address feral and uncontrolled domestic animals on an as-needed basis. Management of pets in the National Monument would be consistent with the pending trails management plan.

### **Recreational Resources – Forest Service Adventure Pass**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A and B), Alternative C, and No Action (D)

Under Alternatives A and B, the Adventure Pass would not be required when parking on National Forest lands within the National Monument and no fees would be required.

when parking on BLM within the National Monument. Eliminating the Adventure Pass requirements for all public lands within the National Monument would have no impacts on plants, wildlife, or special status species. Under Alternative C, the Adventure Pass requirements would remain in place for parking on Forest Service land within the National Monument and a comparable fee would be established for parking on BLM lands within the National Monument. Maintaining the Adventure Pass requirements would have no impacts on plants, wildlife, or special status species. Under the No Action Alternative, the Forest Service Adventure Pass would remain in use on Forest Service land. An equivalent pass on BLM land is not required. Maintaining the Adventure Pass requirements on Forest Service land would have no impacts on plants, wildlife, or special status species.

#### **Management of Geologic Resources – Soils and Geology Inventory and Mapping** Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Inventory and mapping of geological resources within the National Monument may impact wildlife species, depending on the methods, timing, and location of collection used to inventory these resources.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

Under current management, inventory and mapping of soils and geologic features occur as funding and need provide. Implementation of the No Action Alternative would have no impacts on biological resources.

#### **Geological Resources – Outreach and Interpretation**

##### Preferred Plan (Alternatives A, B, and C)

The inventory of geologic resources within the National Monument is not expected to impact wildlife species since the methods used will include compilation of existing geologic data, aerial photographic reconnaissance, surface geologic mapping on foot, and other methods that do not involve mechanical or motorized tools. Impacts from an interpretive and outreach program would depend on the season, location, and type of activity. These impacts would be evaluated when strategy is developed.

##### (Alternative D – No action)

Current outreach and interpretation of geologic resources occurs on a case-by-case basis and includes guided walks, trips to school, and answers to questions from the public as they arise. There are no impacts to biological resources from these activities.

#### **Geologic Resources – Protection and Preservation**

##### Preferred Plan (Alternatives A, B, and C)

Under the preferred alternative, protecting and preserving geologic resources in the National Monument would consist of establishing a priority for acquisition of areas to protect geologic resources and would restrict the collecting of rocks and minerals within the “tufa” and “coral reef formations” along the ‘watermark’ of ancient Lake Cahuilla. Acquisition of land to include under the management umbrella of the National Monument would benefit biological resources by placing those lands acquired in conservation management. Casual rock and mineral collecting may impact biological resources by disturbing soils, removing thermal cover for small plants and animals, and reducing the ability of soils to hold water. These impacts would be expected to be small given that rock and mineral collecting is not a high use within the National Monument. Restricting the collection of tufa provides no anticipated impact to biological resources.

No Action Alternative (D)

Under current management, casual collecting of rocks and minerals is allowed as described in the “Collection of Materials” section of this document. Acquisition guidance is provided in the CDCA Plan (1980 as amended) and Forest Service SBNF Management Plan (1989). Casual rock and mineral collecting may impact biological resources by disturbing soils, removing thermal cover for small plants and animals, and reducing the ability of soils to hold water. These impacts would be expected to be small given that rock and mineral collecting is not a high use within the National Monument.

**Educational Resources Strategy – Including Public Information, Signage, Education and Interpretation**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Development and implementation of a sign strategy would have a positive impact on biological resources by providing effective direction to visitors regarding the necessary limited use of biologically sensitive areas.

Enhancement of the interpretive program would benefit biological resources by increasing the amount and content of information to the public. The benefits would include increased awareness and understanding of biological issues on the National Monument.

No Action Alternative (D)

The BLM CDCA Plan (1980 as amended) and the Forest Service SBNF Management Plan (1989), and the National Monument Interpretive Concept Plan (2002) would serve as the basis for signs and interpretation within the National Monument. Continuing to implement education and interpretation per the CDCA Plan (1980 as amended) and the Forest Service SBNF Plan (1989) would have no impacts to biological resources.

**Management of Scientific Resources**

Preferred Alternatives (A, B, and C)

Under the preferred alternative, maintaining GIS coverages of resources would help clarify management issues and assist the decision making process regarding which areas warrant additional protection. In addition, research promoting understanding and increased knowledge of National Monument resources would be encouraged. Research is a discretionary action requiring a permit from BLM and Forest Service and as such would be subject to both appropriate level of NEPA analysis and ESA consultation, if warranted.

No Action Alternative D

Research would continue to be permitted under current management according to BLM CDCA Plan (1980 as amended) and the Forest Service SBNF Plan (1989). Research permits are discretionary actions and may be subject to NEPA analysis and ESA consultation.

**Management of Access, Visitation, Facilities, and Uses –Access**

Preferred Plan (Alternatives A, B, C)

Securing legal access across non-federal land through key entry points, where trails cross non-federal land through 1) easements; 2) acquisitions; and 3) agreements with local jurisdictions would have no impacts to biological resources. Decisions on how, when, and what the legal access points are used for may impact biological resources depending on the location, season of use, and types of use allowed. Such actions if

taken, would be subject to an appropriate level of NEPA analysis and ESA consultation, if warranted.

No Action Alternative (D)

Under the No Action Alternative (D), the BLM CDCA Plan (1980 as amended) and Forest Service SBNF Management Plan (1989), legal access across non-federal land is addressed on a case-by-case basis. Impacts to biological resources are addressed case-by-case as well.

**Management of Access, Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Private Property Access and Concerns**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Rights-of-way grants (ROW) are discretionary actions that require NEPA and ESA analysis and compliance. Impacts to biological resources would be evaluated for each ROW application received. Communication with local residents and private property owners would positively benefit biological resources by developing a network for coordinated management of sensitive biological resources that cross jurisdictional boundaries. Such actions, if taken would be subject to an appropriate level of NEPA analysis and ESA consultation, if warranted.

No Action Alternative (D)

BLM and the Forest Service would continue current outreach efforts to private landowners and would address private property conflicts on a case-by-case basis. No Impacts to biological resources would result from No Action Alternative.

**Management of Access, Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Facility Development**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Facility development would occur as needed to replace aging facilities, increase public health and safety, and increase education of the public through the use of signs and kiosks. Facility construction would occur in areas previously disturbed to minimize impacts to undisturbed sites. This would potentially reduce impacts to biological resources, including plants that may otherwise have been destroyed during the construction phases of the project. Wildlife would be disturbed and possibly displaced by new facilities, temporarily or permanently. However, new facilities would be subject to NEPA and ESA requirements and impacts would be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Appropriate mitigations, if warranted, would be developed and implemented under these situations.

No Action Alternative

Facility development would occur on an as needed basis. Impacts to biological resources would be assessed on case-by-case basis.

**Management of Access, Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Highway 74**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

The preferred alternative would provide for increased coordination between Caltrans, Forest Service, and BLM and would result in more efficient and effective management of biological resources potentially affected by Highway 74.

No Action Alternative (D)

The No Action Alternative would have no impacts on biological resources within the National Monument.

**Management of Access, Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Monitoring Visitor Use**  
Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Monitoring and understanding visitor use patterns may have a beneficial effect on biological resources, enabling the National Monument manager to direct visitor use away from sensitive areas or during particular seasons if needed.

No Action Alternative (D)

The No Action Alternative would have no impacts on biological resources within the National Monument

**Management of Access, Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Hazards to Facilities, Visitor Safety**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

There would be no impacts to biological resources resulting from additional coordination or from existing hazard management.

**Management of Access, Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Fire Management**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Preparing a coordinated fire management plan with other agencies would positively impact biological resources that occur within the National Monument because it would lead to a unified regional approach to fire management. This would provide a long-term benefit to species and habitat by addressing species and habitat needs on a landscape level with multiple land-managing agencies in agreement with fire management decisions. Impacts to specific species would be evaluated in the Fire Management Plan and ESA Section 7 consultation conducted as needed.

No Action Alternative (D)

The No Action Alternative would have no impacts on biological resources within the National Monument

**Water Resources – Surface and Ground Water Resources**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Coordination of water resource management actions would increase effectiveness of management actions, increasing quality and quantity of water for wildlife and facilitating recovery of threatened and endangered species. In addition, management of water resources may improve riparian habitat quality, including distribution and abundance of native desert riparian species.

No Action Alternative (D)

Under the No Action Alternative, BLM and Forest Service would continue to monitor and repair water sources for biological resources on a case-by-case basis. Currently there is no coordination between agencies for water sources that may be multi-jurisdictional.

**Adaptive Management and Monitoring Program – Implementing the Plan**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Coordination with partner agencies regarding the implementation of the actions proposed through the National Monument Management Plan would benefit biological resources by increasing the effectiveness and efficiency with which biological species and habitats would be managed. Increased partnerships would result in faster implementation, sharing of resources, and a unified approach to species needs.

No Action Alternative (D)

Implementing the actions proposed through the National Monument Management Plan without seeking partnerships and non-traditional funding sources would negatively impact biological resources as actions would be limited to only those funded completely by Forest Service and BLM.

**4.B.4. Geological Resource, Soil, Mineral and Energy**

**Statement of Adverse Energy Effects:**

In accordance with Executive Order 13122, National policy requires that all decisions will take into consideration adverse impacts on the President's National Energy Policy. Since the Santa Rosa Monument is withdrawn from mineral entry through the Monument legislation, there is no discretionary action on this issue for BLM or Forest Service. Therefore, the Resource Management Plan would have no adverse effect on energy and is in compliance with national energy policy.

**Biological Resources – Habitat Management – Management of Noxious, Non-native, and Invasive Plant Species**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

Proposed management of noxious, non-native, and invasive plant species is not expected to impact geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources. The No Action Alternative would have no impacts on geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources within the National Monument.

**Biological Resources – Management of Special Species**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

The alternatives presented for management of special species would not impact geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources. The No Action Alternative would have no impacts on geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources within the National Monument.

**Biological Resources – Monitoring Program**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

The alternatives presented for a biological resources monitoring program would not impact geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources. The No Action Alternative would have no impacts on geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources within the National Monument.

**Cultural Resources Strategy – Including Research, Inventory, etc.**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

Cultural resources research and inventories are not expected to impact geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources. The No Action Alternative would have no impacts on geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources within the National Monument.

**Recreation Resources - Strategic Recreation Management Plan**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Initiation of the development of a Strategic Recreation Management Plan would not impact geologic, soil, minerals, or energy resources. The No Action Alternative would



have no impacts on geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources within the National Monument.

**Recreational Resources – Hang Gliding**

Preferred Plan (Alternative B), Alternative A, C and No Action (D)

Hang gliding within the National Monument would not impact geologic, soil, mineral and energy resources. The No Action Alternative would have no impacts on geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources within the National Monument.

**Recreational Resources – Recreational Paintball**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Prohibiting recreational paintball would not adversely impact geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources in the National Monument

No Action Alternative (D)

Paintball has the potential to deface geologic resources within the National Monument.

**Recreational Resources – Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (PCT)**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

Management of the PCT under this alternative would not adversely impact geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources. The No Action Alternative would have no impacts on geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources within the National Monument.

**Recreational Resources – Recreational Shooting**

Preferred Plan (Alternative C), Alternative A, B and No Action (D)

Recreational shooting within the National Monument is not expected to impact geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources. The No Action Alternative would have no impacts on geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources within the National Monument.

**Recreational Resources – Pets - Within Essential Bighorn Sheep Habitat**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

Management of pets within essential bighorn sheep habitat (Figure 6) would not impact geologic, soil, mineral, or energy resources. The No Action Alternative would have no impacts on geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources within the National Monument.

**Recreational Resources – Pets- Outside Essential Bighorn Sheep Habitat**

Preferred Plan (Alternative B), Alternative A, C, and No Action (D)

Management of pets outside essential bighorn sheep habitat (Figure 6) would not impact geologic, soil, mineral or energy resources. The No Action Alternative would have no impacts on geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources within the National Monument.

**Recreational Resources – Feral and Uncontrolled Domestic**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

This alternative would not impact geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources in the National Monument. The No Action Alternative would have no impacts on geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources within the National Monument.

**Recreational Resources - Forest Service Adventure Pass**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A and B)

This alternative would not impact geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources in the National Monument. The No Action Alternative would have no impacts on geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources within the National Monument.

**Geological Resources Strategy –Including Inventory and Mapping, Protection and Preservation, etc.**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

There would be positive impacts to geologic and soil resources. These would consist of an inventory and map all of the important geologic resources within the National Monument, including the Martinez Mountain Landslide, the Santa Rosa Shear Zone, the San Jacinto Fault Zone, and the ‘watermark’ and related shoreline features of the ancient Lake Cahuilla, a compilation all sources of geologic maps and current USGS mapping projects to support the preparation of a comprehensive geologic map of the National Monument, a mapping of the geology in the unmapped southerly and easterly portions of the National Monument, and a 3<sup>rd</sup> order soil survey for non-mapped portions of the National Monument. There would be no impacts to minerals and energy resources with this alternative.

No Action Alternative (D)

The No Action Alternative would have no impacts on geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources within the National Monument; however, geologic and soil resources may be impacted due to the lack of a comprehensive geologic and soils inventory of the National Monument.

**Educational Resources Strategy – Including Public Information, Signage, Education and Interpretation**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

An education resource strategy would result in a positive impact to geologic and soil resources within the National Monument by informing the public of the importance of these resources.

No Action Alternative (D)

The No Action Alternative would have no impacts on geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources within the National Monument.

**Management of Scientific Resources**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Under the preferred alternative, research in the National Monument relative to geologic, soils, minerals, and energy resources would be promoted and encouraged so long as permitting and NEPA requirements are satisfied. Additionally, research work related to these resources would be coordinated and organized.

No Action Alternative (D)

The No Action Alternative would have no impacts on geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources within the National Monument.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities and Uses – Access Across Private Property**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

No impacts to geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources. The No Action Alternative would have no impacts on geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources within the National Monument.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Private Property Concerns**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

No impacts to geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources. The No Action Alternative would have no impacts on geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources within the National Monument.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Facility Development**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

The preferred plan of adopting criteria to guide facility development would provide no adverse impacts to geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources. Future development on already disturbed areas would benefit geologic and soil resources by not causing unneeded surface disturbance.

No Action Alternative (D)

The No Action Alternative would have no impacts on geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources within the National Monument.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Visitor Use with Regard to Hwy 74**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

A proposed MOU between CalTrans, BLM and Forest Service could result in a positive impact to geologic resources within the National Monument, allowing for increased interpretation of geologic resources within the National Monument.

No Action Alternative (D)

The No Action Alternative would have no impacts on geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources within the National Monument.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Monitoring Visitor Use**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Monitoring visitors would provide no adverse impacts to geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources. Understanding visitor use levels of different areas within the National Monument would aid in erosion management of trails. The No Action Alternative would have no impacts on geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources within the National Monument.

No Action Alternative (D)

The No Action Alternative would have no impacts on geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources within the National Monument.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Hazards to Facility, Visitor and Public Safety**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

The preferred plan would provide no adverse impacts to geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources. Increased coordination between law enforcement would aid in enforcement of illegal off road activity, thereby positively impacting soil resources off of road areas. The No Action Alternative would have no impacts on geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources within the National Monument.

No Action Alternative (D)

The No Action Alternative would have no impacts on geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources within the National Monument.

### **Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Fire Plan**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Initiation of a coordinated Fire Plan would provide no impacts to geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources. A future coordinated fire plan would provide a benefit to all resources within the National Monument by increasing effectiveness of fire management thereby reducing negative impacts caused by fighting fires.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

The No Action Alternative would have no impacts on geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources within the National Monument.

### **Water Resources - Surface and Ground Water Resources**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Soil resources would be positively impacted from a watershed assessment and action plan. This plan would identify areas subject to soil erosion and soil loss within the National Monument, and identify measures to mitigate these conditions. Geologic, mineral and energy resources would not be impacted by this preferred alternative.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

The No Action Alternative would have no impacts on geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources within the National Monument.

### **Acquisition Strategy - Acquisition Criteria**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Adopting the criteria provided as guidance for acquiring land within the National Monument would provide no impacts to geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources. An acquisition strategy including highlighting lands with geologic resources as potential acquisition parcels would provide a benefit to geologic resources. No impacts to geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

The No Action Alternative would have no impacts on geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources within the National Monument.

### **Adaptive Management and Monitoring Program – Implementing the Plan**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Coordinating with partners to implement the actions presented would benefit geologic resources, as it would increase effectiveness and efficiency with which actions would be implemented. No adverse impacts to geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources would result from this strategy.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

The No Action Alternative would have no impacts on geologic, soil, mineral, and energy resources within the National Monument.

#### **4.B.5. Noise**

##### **Biological Resources – Habitat Management – Management of Noxious, Non-native, and Invasive Plant Species;– Management of Special Species; – Monitoring Program**

###### **Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)**

The proposed management and control of the spread of non-native, noxious weeds, and invasive species and the reintroduction of indigenous species would not directly affect the surrounding noise environment. Inventory, management and research projects of special status species and fish and wildlife would not directly affect the surrounding noise environment. Any monitoring efforts that would include the use of motorized vehicles and helicopters would result in a temporary, short-term increase of noise in the surrounding environment.

##### **Cultural Resources Strategy – Including Research, Inventory, etc.**

###### **Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action D**

Proposed trail reroutes or closures to protect sensitive resources would help minimize noise levels generated by hikers, mountain bikers and equestrians, although such noise levels are considered minor. Noise from motorized vehicles may increase with the development of educational and interpretive programs although such noise levels would be considered minor.

###### **No Action Alternative (D)**

Adoption of this alternative would maintain current noise levels associated with the CDCA and FS SBNF Management Plan.

##### **Recreation Resources - Strategic Recreation Management Plan**

###### **Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)**

Monitoring recreation use and providing a balance between all types of recreation compatible with conservation and preservation of National Monument Resources would have a no adverse impact on the surrounding noise environment.

##### **Recreational Resources – Hang Gliding**

###### **Preferred Plan (Alternative B), Alternative A, C, and No Action (D)**

No adverse impacts to noise quality are anticipated by all alternatives proposed

##### **Recreational Resources – Recreational Paintball**

###### **Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)**

Prohibiting paintball and paintball like weapons would limit noise associated with such activities through Federal lands within the National Monument. This would provide a slight benefit by reducing noise for visitors to National Monument.

###### **No Action Alternative (D)**

Slight adverse impacts are anticipated in relation to the level of interest that paintball users exhibit on Federal lands within the National Monument.

##### **Recreational Resources – Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (PCT)**

###### **Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)**

No adverse impacts to noise quality are anticipated by all alternatives proposed.

##### **Recreational Resources – Recreational Shooting**

###### **Preferred Plan (Alternative C)**

Prohibiting shooting within the National Monument would lower noise levels in areas where shooting is an existing use.

Alternative A

Shooting generates noise. The use of designated shooting areas would help reduce noise/land use incompatibilities in sensitive National Monument areas, at the same time increasing noise levels in the designated areas.

Alternative B

Shooting generates noise. This alternative would not result in change from the current FS policy. The level of noise on BLM lands would be lower although the degree of noticeable change would be minor.

No Action Alternative (D)

Adoption of this alternative would result in no change to the current status of noise levels within the National Monument.

**Recreational Resources – Pets - Within and Outside Essential Bighorn Sheep Habitat**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

No adverse impacts to noise quality are anticipated by all alternatives proposed.

**Recreational Resources – Feral and Uncontrolled Domestic**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

No adverse impacts to noise quality are anticipated by all alternatives proposed.

**Recreational Resources - Forest Service Adventure Pass**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A and B)

Noise from increased use of motorized vehicles may increase although this change in the noise environment would be minor.

Alternative C

Adoption of this alternative might result in a decrease in the noise environment although this decrease would be very minor.

No Action Alternative (D)

Adoption of this alternative would not result in a change to the noise environment.

**Geological Resources Strategy –Including Inventory and Mapping, Protection and Preservation, etc.**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

Adoption of any alternative proposed would not result in impacts to the noise environment.

**Educational Resources Strategy – Including Public Information, Signage, Education and Interpretation**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

The Public Information Strategy would have no direct impact on the noise environment. The Sign Strategy would have no direct impact on the noise environment. Education and Interpretive Strategy could result in an increase in the noise environment due to increase use and motorized vehicle traffic although this increase would be considered restricted

to certain areas and minor. Use and visitation would be managed in relation to facilities availability, staff and trail conditions.

No Action Alternative (D)

Adoption of this alternative would not result in a change to the noise environment.

**Management of Scientific Resources**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

Adoption of these alternatives would not result in direct impacts to the noise environment.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities and Uses – Access Across Private Property**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

Adoption of these alternatives would not result in direct impacts to the noise environment.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Private Property Concerns**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

Adoption of these alternatives would not result in direct impacts to the noise environment.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Facility Development**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

A priority of placement of facilities in already disturbed areas provides a future benefit by reducing future noise associated with new developments in areas that are not already disturbed. Criteria presented are intended to provide guidelines for future facility development. Actual noise levels will be dependent upon the scope of future projects.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Visitor Use with Regard to Hwy 74**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

Adoption of these alternatives would not result in direct impacts to the noise environment.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Monitoring Visitor Use**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

Adoption of these alternatives would not result in direct impacts to the noise environment.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Hazards to Facility, Visitor and Public Safety**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

Adoption of these alternatives would not result in direct impacts to the noise environment.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Fire Plan**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

No direct impacts to the noise environment would occur as a result the alternatives presented

**Water Resources - Surface and Ground Water Resources**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

Adoption of these alternatives would not result in direct impacts to the noise environment.

**Acquisition Strategy - Acquisition Criteria**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

Adoption of this alternative would have no impact on the noise environment in the National Monument.

**Adaptive Management and Monitoring Program – Implementing the Plan**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

Adoption of this alternative would have no impact on the noise environment in the National Monument.

**4.B.6. Recreational Resources**

**Biological Resources – Habitat Management – Management of Noxious, Non-native, and Invasive Plant Species**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Inventorying public lands to determine distribution of indigenous plant species and non-native species would have no effect on recreational resources; opportunities to pursue recreational activities during the inventory process would be neither enhanced nor diminished.

The development of an action plan to eradicate non-native plants, noxious weeds, and invasive species, and development of a revegetation plan for introducing indigenous species would have no effect on recreational resources; opportunities to pursue recreational activities would be neither enhanced nor diminished during plan development. Upon development of the plan and identification of specific actions, effects on recreational resources would be analyzed.

Educating the public regarding the use of non-native, invasive species for landscaping and decorative plantings may have a beneficial effect on recreational resources. To the extent that such an educational program contributes to a reduction in the spread of invasive species and facilitates the establishment or reestablishment of indigenous species in the National Monument, opportunities for the study of the natural environment as a recreational endeavor would be enhanced. Visitors could better observe natural processes (e.g., plant succession, vegetative adaptation) where invasive species have been eradicated or reduced. Further, opportunities for wildlife viewing would be enhanced to the extent that a shift in the balance between indigenous and non-native plants improves habitat for native animal and insect species, and results in increased numbers and distribution of such species. The extent of benefits to recreation, however, is unknown.

Preparing an annual report that describes non-native, invasive plant treatments and accomplishments would have no effect on recreational resources; opportunities to pursue recreational activities would be neither enhanced nor diminished during report preparation. However, public distribution of the report could have similar effects as described above relative to the education program.

No Action Alternative (D)

Current efforts to eradicate invasive weeds have likely benefited recreational resources, though to an unknown extent. Opportunities for the study of the natural environment as



a recreational endeavor have likely been enhanced where invasive species have been reduced and visitors can better observe natural processes (e.g., plant succession, vegetative adaptation). To the extent that a shift in the balance between indigenous and non-natural plants has improved habitat for native animal and insect species, and numbers and distribution of such species have concomitantly increased, opportunities for wildlife viewing have likely been enhanced. These benefits would be expected to continue with an on-going program of tamarisk eradication.

### **Biological Resources – Management of Special Species**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

The Preferred Plan would have no direct effect on recreational resources. A comprehensive inventory of plant and animal species, collaborative management of special status species, and encouragement of research would not, in and of themselves, enhance or diminish opportunities for recreation. However, collaborative management of special status species would enhance opportunities for wildlife viewing if it leads to an increase in numbers and distribution of species currently listed as threatened or endangered. The chance that visitors might see such species as Peninsular Ranges bighorn sheep may be improved.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

The No Action Alternative is similar to the Preferred Plan except that inventories of plant and animal species are accomplished on a project-specific basis instead of through a comprehensive National Monument -wide inventory. This difference in approach to the inventory of plants and animals within the National Monument would continue to have no effect on recreational resources; opportunities to pursue recreational activities would not be altered.

Current collaboration in the management of special status species has supported recovery efforts for threatened and endangered species, thereby enhancing opportunities for wildlife viewing where increased numbers and distribution of such species have occurred. For example, the increasing population of Peninsular Ranges bighorn sheep over the last several years has improved chances that visitors might see them in the wild. This enhancement of wildlife viewing would be expected to continue with ongoing collaboration.

### **Biological Resources – Monitoring Program**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

The development of a monitoring program would have no effect on recreational resources. Opportunities to pursue recreational activities would be neither enhanced nor diminished during program development. Upon program development and identification of specific monitoring actions, effects on recreational resources would be analyzed.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

Monitoring in conformance with the Forest Service Standards and Guidelines, CDCA Plan's Land Health Standards, Habitat Conservation Objectives, and Peninsular Ranges bighorn sheep strategy, upon implementation, is not anticipated to have an effect on recreational resources; opportunities to pursue recreational activities are not likely to be enhanced or diminished during monitoring efforts.

### **Cultural Resources Strategy – Including Research, Inventory, etc.**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

The inventory, evaluation, and monitoring of cultural resources within the National Monument, as well as the development of a cultural resources management plan, would have no effect on recreational resources. Opportunities to pursue recreational activities would be neither enhanced nor diminished while these aspects of the program are being accomplished. If avoidance and/or mitigation of adverse impacts to significant cultural resources were recommended through the management plan, effects on recreational resources would be analyzed at that time.

The interpretation of historic and prehistoric “magnet” sites, in conjunction with the development and implementation of other interpretive programs relating to cultural resources, would enhance opportunities for experiencing and understanding the history and prehistory of the area. Such opportunities would contribute to overall visitor enjoyment of the National Monument, as would the development of brochures, pamphlets, monographs, webpages, and other works that emphasize the relevance, fragility and other values of cultural and historic resources.

Development of a policy to provide Tribal member access to gather traditional materials, monitoring the effects of traditional collecting and gathering, and providing for Native American access to ceremonial and religious sites would have no effect on recreational resources. Opportunities for the general public to pursue recreational activities would not be enhanced or diminished.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

Current efforts to inventory, evaluate, and monitor cultural resources within the National Monument, as well as existing Tribal collecting and gathering of traditional materials, would continue to have no effect on recreational resources; opportunities to pursue recreational activities would be neither enhanced nor diminished. Current interpretation of historic and prehistoric resources would continue to enhance opportunities for experiencing and understanding the history and prehistory of the area, though to a lesser degree than a more-developed program as identified under the Preferred Plan.

#### **Recreational Resources – Strategic Recreation Management Plan** **Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)**

The development of a strategic recreation management plan would have no effect on recreational resources. Opportunities to pursue recreational activities would be neither enhanced nor diminished during plan preparation. Upon plan development and identification of specific actions, effects on recreational resources would be analyzed. Impacts to recreation occurring on BLM and Forest Service lands from the pending trails management plan for the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains, to be incorporated in the strategic plan, would be analyzed through the relevant NEPA document.

It is anticipated that a strategic recreation management plan for the National Monument would enhance visitor experiences by encouraging consistent management among jurisdictions, especially where users traverse lands owned or managed by different parties, e.g., consistent maintenance of a single trail crossing BLM, Tribal, city and other lands. Conflicts between potentially incompatible recreational activities would be addressed; such conflicts may be minimized where they occur. Establishing and participating in a multi-jurisdictional working group to address changing circumstances would allow for more effective management; actions undertaken by the various partners could be proactive instead of reactive, thereby minimizing potential user conflicts or damage to resource values before they occur. Effective and efficient expenditures of

funds would be likely, resulting in enhancements to recreational opportunities; redundant expenditures would be minimized.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

Lack of a strategic recreation management plan for the National Monument would continue a somewhat uncoordinated approach to management of recreation resources by various jurisdictions, except as provided for in the pending trails management plan for the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains. As a result, potential incompatibility of various recreational activities, as well as visitor movements across jurisdictional boundaries, would not be given due consideration. Expenditures of funds on redundant and unneeded facilities due to uncoordinated management could diminish the overall quality of recreational experiences as funds that could be allocated to improve existing facilities or develop new facilities might be inappropriately directed. Management of connecting trails, including maintenance activities, could be inconsistent from one trail to the next, or from one segment to another.

Further, inconsistent dissemination of information at recreation sites (e.g., trailheads) could confuse visitors and inadequately inform them of available recreational resources throughout the National Monument, thereby diminishing their overall enjoyment of a National Monument visit.

### **Recreational Resources – Hang Gliding**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative B)

Restricting hang gliding activities, including launchings and landings, to areas outside and not adjacent to essential bighorn sheep habitat (Figure 6) would diminish opportunities for this activity. Hang gliding from Vista Point on Highway 74 (first flown in 1973 and recognized as an international attraction ever since [Coachella Valley Hang Gliding Association, 1999]) would be prohibited. Whether sites outside bighorn sheep habitat and reasonably accessible to hang gliding enthusiasts would be suitable for this activity in the National Monument has not been determined.

#### Alternative A

Opportunities for hang gliding would be enhanced upon identification of appropriate areas for the activity, thereby allowing the local hang gliding association, among others, to promote this use in the Coachella Valley. Currently, opportunities for hang gliding in the National Monument are not clearly defined. Hang gliding from Vista Point on Highway 74 (first flown in 1973 and recognized as an international attraction ever since [Coachella Valley Hang Gliding Association, 1999]), flying over bighorn sheep pens established by the Bighorn Institute, and landing adjacent to the National Monument Visitor Center on private land have resulted in controversy surrounding the activity. A permitting program, in conjunction with identification of approved launching and landing sites, would provide for increased control of hang gliding activities and greater assuredness that such opportunities would be available.

#### Alternative C

Impacts to hang gliding would be similar to those described for the Preferred Plan (Alternative B). Other than Vista Point, it is not known whether suitable sites for hang gliding occur within the National Monument. If such sites exist, then a prohibition of hang gliding would diminish opportunities for this activity, though to an unknown extent as levels of use have not been determined.

#### No Action Alternative D

Opportunities for hang gliding on BLM and Forest Service lands in the National Monument would be maintained, though such opportunities are currently not clearly defined and recognized, especially as relate to the preeminent launching site from Vista Point on Highway 74 and the landing site adjacent to the National Monument Visitor Center. Unresolved controversy surrounding the Vista Point-Visitor Center use area would likely continue, thereby clouding perceptions of opportunities for this activity.

#### **Recreational Resources – Recreational Paintball**

##### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Prohibiting paintball activities on BLM and Forest Service lands within the National Monument would diminish opportunities for this activity, though to an unknown extent. Levels of paintball activities in the National Monument, if they occur at all, are unknown. Such prohibition, on the other hand, could enhance visitor activities that relate to enjoyment of natural and cultural resources, as the potential for paintball stains would be minimized.

#### No Action Alternative D

Opportunities for paintball activities would be maintained on BLM lands within the National Monument, though the level of occurrence of such activities is unknown. The Forest Plan Revision for the San Bernardino National Forest will establish the manner in which paintball activities will be managed on Forest Service lands.

#### **Recreational Resources – Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (PCT)**

##### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Establishing a 500-foot corridor along the PCT and requiring coordination with the Pacific Trail Association (PCTA) when management activities are proposed within the corridor on BLM and Forest Service lands would provide for greater protection of recreational values associated with the Trail in furtherance of the National Trails System Act (Public Law 90-543, as amended). Such coordination would assure that recreational values within the corridor are given appropriate consideration in the decision-making process. The conservation and enjoyment of nationally significant scenic, historic, natural, and cultural qualities of the areas through which the PCT passes would be enhanced.

#### No Action Alternative D

Effects of this alternative would be similar to those described under the Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C), except that the area of consideration relative to the PCT's recreational values, hence the "trigger" for coordination with the PCTA, would be less-clearly defined.

#### **Recreational Resources – Recreational Shooting**

##### Preferred Plan (Alternative C)

Prohibiting recreational shooting on Federal lands within the National Monument would diminish opportunities for this recreational activity, though to an unknown extent as levels of current use have not been monitored. However, the impacts on recreational shooting are anticipated to be minor. Presently, no recreational shooting is allowed on Forest Service lands within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Wilderness areas. (Figure 4) Where target shooting is allowed, it usually occurs within a short walking distance from a shooter's vehicle. As few open roads exist where shooting is legal (2 miles of

open routes on BLM lands and 16 miles on Forest Service lands), it is reasonable to conclude that recreational shooting does not occur in much of the National Monument.

Conversely, such prohibition would enhance visitor safety and eliminate noise emanating from the activity, concomitantly enhancing enjoyment of the National Monument's resources by reducing fears of being shot and fostering quietude. Such benefits, however, would be minor given the limited extent of recreational shooting believed to be occurring.

#### Alternative A

Restricting recreational shooting to designated areas within the Monument would reduce the area available for this activity, though opportunities would still exist. Concentrating shooters in specific areas, depending on any limitations therein imposed (e.g., target shooting in a "range" setting versus unmanaged shooting within the area), could diminish the enjoyment derived from this activity, though to an unknown extent. Concentrating noise from shooting within these areas could also adversely affect recreational experiences for shooters and others within the designated areas and those pursuing non-shooting endeavors in the immediate vicinity.

Conversely, restricting shooters to designated areas would enhance visitor safety and reduce noise outside the shooting areas, concomitantly enhancing enjoyment of the National Monument's resources by reducing fears of being shot and fostering quietude. Such benefits, however, would be minor given the limited extent of recreational shooting believed to be occurring. Where target shooting is allowed, it usually occurs within a short walking distance from a shooter's vehicle. As few open roads exist where shooting is legal (2 miles of open routes on BLM lands and 16 miles on Forest Service lands), it is reasonable to conclude that recreational shooting does not occur in much of the National Monument.

#### Alternative B and No Action (D)

Opportunities for recreational shooting would continue to be available where they currently exist, though limited to a slightly greater extent because of the 150-yard restriction relative to developed sites on BLM lands. Concerns by visitors for their safety where shooting is permitted, as well as disturbances to quietude, could diminish enjoyment of the National Monument's resources, though such impacts would be minor given the limited extent of recreational shooting believed to be occurring. Where target shooting is allowed, it usually occurs within a short walking distance from a shooter's vehicle. As few open roads exist where shooting is legal (2 miles of open routes on BLM lands and 16 miles on Forest Service lands), it is reasonable to conclude that recreational shooting does not occur in much of the National Monument.

### **Recreational Resources – Pets - Within Essential Bighorn Sheep Habitat** **Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)**

Impacts to recreation from allowing dogs in designated areas at visitor centers, parking areas, and other developed sites within essential bighorn sheep habitat, and requiring they be on a leash in such areas, would be addressed upon development of a trails management plan for the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains. Where such designated pet areas are identified, opportunities for pet owners to enjoy developed facilities while providing for the health of their pets would be enhanced. Health of pets may be protected by providing an outside environment to wait while their owners are inside visitor centers, especially on hot days when the temperatures inside vehicles

(where pets might otherwise be left) climb quickly and can be fatal. Requiring owners to remove any wastes produced by their dogs in areas where pet use is allowed would enhance enjoyment of the National Monument's facilities; waste from dogs in developed areas can become unsightly and may pose health risks.

#### No Action Alternative D

Impacts from managing dogs within bighorn sheep habitat in accordance with the CDCA Plan Amendment for the Coachella Valley would be addressed upon development of a trails management plan for the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains. Current interim management prohibiting dogs on BLM lands east of Palm Canyon (with exceptions) diminishes opportunities for individuals to enjoy the National Monument's resources in the company of their pets.

#### **Recreational Resources – Pets- Outside Essential Bighorn Sheep Habitat Preferred Plan (Alternative B)**

Requiring pets to be on leashes outside bighorn sheep habitat diminishes opportunities to allow them to run free. The free running of pets, which enhances the quality of their exercise, has been observed on many occasions where owners walk their dogs. (Monitoring of trail use in the Coachella Valley from December 1999 to September 2000 revealed that 117 of 154 people walking their dogs [76%] allowed them to run free [BLM 2000].) This restriction would also, in effect, prohibit dogs from accompanying equestrians and mountain bikers on trail rides (except in instances when the pet can be carried); the leash could become entangled with horse hooves or bike components, thereby creating an unsafe condition.

Conversely, a requirement to control pets through the use of leashes could enhance many an individual's enjoyment of the National Monument. Unleashed dogs roaming ahead of their owners in the backcountry can strike fear, when encountered, in other trail users, especially when alone. Injuries can occur when people who are afraid of dogs inadvertently fall or back into objects (e.g., cacti, rock outcrops, etc.) in an effort to protect themselves, even when the dog is friendly (Rashid 2002). In instances when the dog is actually aggressive, the safety of trail users could be in jeopardy. In addition, when an unleashed dog encounters another unleashed dog, inherent aggressive tendencies could result in injury to the animals, as well as injury to their owners upon an attempt to intervene.

Requiring owners to remove any wastes produced by their dogs would also enhance a visitor's enjoyment of the National Monument; waste from dogs can become unsightly and may pose health risks.

#### Alternative A

Opportunities for individuals to enjoy the National Monument's resources in the company of their pets outside bighorn sheep habitat would be maintained, though the character of the activity would be changed where a leash requirement currently exists (i.e., Forest Service lands within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Wilderness areas. Figure 4.). Allowing pets off leash often enhances the quality of a pet's exercise by providing them opportunities to freely run. Requiring owners to remove any wastes produced by their pets would enhance a visitor's enjoyment of the National Monument; waste from pets can become unsightly and may pose health risks.

The potential for adverse effects from free-roaming dogs, in particular, would continue on BLM lands and increase on Forest Service lands. Unleashed dogs roaming ahead of their owners in the backcountry can strike fear, when encountered, in other trail users, and may indirectly result in injury. In instances when the dog is aggressive, the safety of trail users could be in jeopardy. Injuries to dogs and their owners can result when unleashed aggressive dogs encounter other dogs.

#### Alternative C

Restricting pets outside bighorn sheep habitat to paved surfaces and designated pet areas at developed facilities diminishes opportunities for visitors to experience the National Monument 's backcountry with their pets, whether on foot, horseback or bicycle. For individuals traveling alone through the backcountry and relying on accompaniment by a dog for personal protection, the prohibition of pets could increase their perception of danger, thereby potentially diminishing their enjoyment of National Monument resources.

Conversely, the prohibition of pets in the backcountry could enhance enjoyment of a visitor's experience to the National Monument. Encounters with dogs, in particular, and the fears they instill in certain individuals would be reduced. Requiring owners to remove any wastes produced by their dogs in areas where pet use is allowed would enhance enjoyment of the National Monument's facilities; waste from dogs in developed areas can become unsightly and may pose health risks.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

Opportunities for individuals to enjoy the National Monument's resources in the company of their pets outside bighorn sheep habitat, where such use is currently allowed, would be maintained. Adverse effects of such use—encounters with dogs and deposition of pet wastes—would be the same as described under the other alternatives.

### **Recreational Resources – Feral and Uncontrolled Domestic Animals**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Establishing a protocol for proactive control of feral and uncontrolled domestic animals could enhance a visitor's safety and enjoyment of National Monument resources, especially while hiking, horseback riding or mountain biking in the backcountry. Free-roaming dogs in particular, especially when they travel in packs, can strike fear when encountered. In instances when dogs are aggressive, the safety of trail users could be in jeopardy. The extent of such control measures, as well as the magnitude of enhancements to visitor safety and enjoyment would remain unknown until the protocol is established.

#### No Action Alternative D

Addressing feral and uncontrolled domestic animals on an as-needed basis (i.e., acting in response to reported encounters) could result in increased adverse incidents relative to the Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C). Visitor safety and enjoyment of National Monument resources would be concomitantly diminished.

### **Recreational Resources - Forest Service Adventure Pass**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A and B)

Free parking on BLM lands for noncommercial, noncompetitive activities would continue. Easy access to such lands would be maintained. Funding for site improvements and visitor services would continue to come from non-fee sources, subject to funding availability, or voluntary contributions if such a program is established. Funding

fluctuations could limit the extent and timing of improvements to sites and provisions of visitor services.

Little revenue is generated from the Adventure Pass program on Forest Service lands within the National Monument. However, Adventure Pass fees currently fund employees who maintain facilities within the National Monument, in part. Elimination of these fees may result in reduced facility maintenance, thereby diminishing visitor enjoyment, if funding is not available from non-fee sources. On the other hand, curtailing the Adventure Pass program in the National Monument would eliminate any pre-planning for Pass acquisition, especially for those not possessing an annual Pass, thereby promoting easy access to Forest Service lands.

#### Alternative C

Fees for parking on BLM lands would generate funding for site improvements and visitor services in addition to funds from other sources. Site improvements and provision of visitor services emanating from expenditures of parking fees would enhance enjoyment of the National Monument resources and could improve health and safety conditions, commensurate with the amount of fees collected.

On the other hand, fees charged for parking in the Visitor Center parking lot could discourage individuals from using the facility. This, in turn, would limit the dissemination of information to the public. As much of the information provided to visitors at the Center focuses on acceptable behaviors that promote resource conservation, there could be an increase in unacceptable behaviors due to individuals not knowing the consequences of their actions, though the extent to which this might occur is unknown.

In addition, the land ownership pattern in the Coachella Valley does not foster effective implementation of a parking fee program. Many of the trailheads for trails that traverse BLM lands are located on non-BLM property, e.g., trailheads for the North Lykken, Garstin, Araby, Fern Canyon, Vandeventer, Cathedral Canyon, Bear Creek Canyon and Boo Hoff Trails. BLM's best opportunity to implement a parking fee that could generate sufficient funds for site improvements and visitor services would appear to be at the Art Smith Trailhead, a developed facility with paved parking. However, BLM could only charge fees for use of half the parking lot as the California Department of Fish and Game manages the other half of the lot, including the access road and gate. Collecting fees for use of half the parking lot only would be untenable. Where BLM does manage lands upon which trailheads are located and parking would occur (i.e., Martinez Canyon), visitation is low and no parking areas have been developed. Administrative costs of collecting fees at such remote sites would likely exceed the amount of fees collected.

Continuation of the Adventure Pass program on Forest Service lands would provide funds to sustain current maintenance levels for developed facilities, thereby enhancing visitor enjoyment of the National Monument. At the same time, acquisition of an Adventure Pass, especially for those not possessing an annual Pass and needing to go out of their way to purchase a one-day Pass, may thwart ease of access to Forest Service lands and discourage visitors from enjoying the National Monument resources.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

Effects of current parking fee collection within the National Monument (i.e., no fees for parking on BLM lands and an Adventure Pass required for parking on Forest Service



lands) would be the same as described under Alternative A and B for BLM lands, and Alternative C for Forest Service lands.

### **Geological Resources Strategy –Including Inventory and Mapping, Protection and Preservation, etc.**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Inventorying and mapping geologic structures on BLM and Forest Service lands within the National Monument would have no effect on recreational resources; opportunities to pursue recreational activities during the inventory and mapping process would not be enhanced or diminished.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

Impacts to recreational resources from adopting the No Action Alternative would be the same as described for the Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C).

### **Educational Resources Strategy – Including Public Information, Signage, Education and Interpretation**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Dissemination of information about recreation opportunities and protection of resource values, as well as the development of interpretive and educational displays and programs to increase visitor understanding of the National Monument resources, would enhance visitor enjoyment. Increased knowledge about the natural and cultural resources found within the National Monument generally leads to greater appreciation and enjoyment of them. The installation of entry and interpretive/orientation signs would also enhance visitor enjoyment by informing the public as to the various opportunities for recreation to be found within the National Monument.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

Current dissemination of information, and provision of interpretive and educational programs and materials would continue to enhance visitor enjoyment of the National Monument in similar fashion to that described for the Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C), though to a lesser extent commensurate with an effort of lesser magnitude.

### **Management of Scientific Resources**

#### Preferred Plan Alternative A, B, and C

Providing relevant research information on the Internet, as well as incorporating research with interpretive programs, enhances visitor understanding, therefore enjoyment, of National Monument resources. Improved understanding of resource issues through research could result in greater sensitivity to the impacts that visitor use may have on the resources themselves; such understanding may contribute to the protection of resource values. Maintaining these values provides the foundation for continued visitor use and enjoyment of the National Monument.

#### No Action Alternative D

Although the reporting of research results is required in conjunction with issuance of a research permit, the lack of a strategy to disseminate relevant research information does nothing to enhance visitor use and enjoyment of National Monument resources. However, it is anticipated that such information would, at some point, be made available to the public. Hence, benefits would be similar to those discussed for the Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C), though perhaps slower in being realized.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities and Uses – Access Across Private Property**  
**Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)**

Securing legal access across non-federal lands through easements, acquisition, agreements, and/or Memoranda of Understanding would ensure long-term enjoyment of the National Monument's resources. Restricting use of certain areas or trails due to non-federal landowner actions (e.g., posting of "No Trespassing" signs) would be minimized or eliminated to the extent that such legal access can be secured. Whether or where non-federal landowners would restrict public access in the future is unknown.

**No Action Alternative (D)**

Securing legal access on a case-by-case basis absent a strategy that focuses on key entry points could result in the loss of recreational opportunities where non-federal landowners take action to restrict public access. Whether such restrictions would occur in the future is unknown.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Private Property Concerns**  
**Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)**

Protection, enhancement, and restoration of resources on private lands through collaborative efforts would maintain or enhance visitor enjoyment to the extent that opportunities for recreational activities are concomitantly maintained or enhanced. For example, where native plants on private lands are protected and/or non-native vegetation is eradicated, thereby contributing to reestablishment of indigenous species and eradication of exotic species on BLM and Forest Service lands, opportunities for recreational nature study of the natural environment would be enhanced.

**No Action Alternative D**

Continuing current outreach efforts and addressing private property conflicts with land management goals of the National Monument on a case-by-case basis would result in similar impacts to those described for the Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C), though to a lesser degree than the more-developed strategy as therein identified.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses –Facility Development**  
**Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)**

Developing an architectural theme for the National Monument that sets the stage for facility design would result in beneficial impacts to recreational resources. A consistent architectural theme would enhance visitor recognition of National Monument facilities, thereby encouraging their use and enjoyment. Impacts to recreation (beneficial and adverse) from development of facilities on an as-needed basis would be addressed when such projects are proposed. However, the parameters identified under this alternative for facility development would ensure facilities are developed or upgraded where needed, and located to minimize new disturbances to the landscape, thereby enhancing visitor enjoyment of the National Monument by protecting resource values.

**No Action Alternative (D)**

Impacts to recreation would not be addressed until projects are proposed. However, the lack of an architectural theme, as well as a lack of parameters for facility development, could adversely affect visitor experiences. Visitor recognition of National Monument facilities would be diminished if a thematic architectural design is not established; visitors could pass by informational and educational facilities (e.g., kiosks) if they fail to associate them with the National Monument, thus not gain valuable information regarding National Monument opportunities and resource values. Development or

improvement of facilities could be delayed under less-defined parameters, thereby delaying opportunities to enhance visitor enjoyment.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Visitor Use with Regard to Hwy 74**  
**Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)**

The drafting of a Memorandum of Understanding between Caltrans, Forest Service and BLM to identify the process for communication and consultations regarding activities along the Highway 74 corridor would have no direct effect on recreational resources. Impacts to recreation would be considered when actions to improve travel and interpretive opportunities within the corridor are identified. However, it is anticipated that future actions undertaken to improve safety for National Monument visitors who travel on Highway 74 would enhance visitor enjoyment; concerns about safety would likely be reduced.

**No Action Alternative (D)**

Impacts to recreational resources under this alternative would be similar to those described for the Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C), though addressing maintenance and safety would occur in a less-structured manner, perhaps delaying actions that might enhance visitor enjoyment of the National Monument.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Monitoring Visitor Use**  
**Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)**

Monitoring visitor use through a variety of methods would generally have no effect on recreational resources; opportunities to pursue recreational activities during the monitoring process would not be enhanced or diminished, though participating in use surveys by answering questionnaires, if administered on site, would slightly delay recreationists from engaging in their activities.

**No Action Alternative (D)**

Monitoring visitor use on an as-needed basis would result in the same impacts to recreational resources as described for the Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C).

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Hazards to Facility, Visitor and Public Safety**

**Preferred Alternative (Alternative A, B, and C)**

Improving emergency responses through the coordinated efforts of BLM, Forest Service, Riverside County Mounted Police, and Desert Sheriff's Search and Rescue would enhance visitor safety within the National Monument. Safer visits would enhance the quality of visitor experiences.

**No Action Alternative D**

Addressing hazards to visitor safety on a agency-by-agency basis without coordination would reduce the effectiveness of a hazard reduction program, thereby reducing visitor safety within the National Monument relative to the Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C).

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Fire Plan**  
**Alternative A, B, and C**

Development of comprehensive fire plan for the National Monument would have no direct effect on recreational resources. Opportunities to pursue recreational activities during development of the plan would be neither enhanced nor diminished. Impacts to

recreation would be considered when actions addressing responses to fire are identified. It is anticipated, however, that both positive and negative effects may occur, e.g., fire management based on habitat improvement could enhance natural conditions and improve opportunities for wildlife viewing, but establishing fire breaks could adversely affect the visual integrity of an area, thereby diminishing opportunities for landscape photography.

No Action Alternative D

Current fire management direction would result in similar impacts to those described for the Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C).

**Water Resources - Surface and Ground Water Resources**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Coordination with water management agencies and water users to enhance current efforts to manage surface and ground water would have no direct effect on recreational resources. Opportunities to pursue recreational activities would be neither enhanced nor diminished. Impacts to recreation would be considered if new actions identified through the coordinated effort to reduce water pollution affect recreation opportunities.

No Action Alternative (D)

Impacts to recreational resources would be similar to those described for the Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C).

**Acquisition Strategy - Acquisition Criteria**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Identification of recreational access being of strategic significance in the prioritization of land acquisitions from willing sellers ensures that opportunities for recreation in the National Monument would not be constrained by future private landowner actions, the extent of which is unknown. However, needs for recreational access on newly acquired parcels would be evaluated in concert with other resource considerations (e.g., wildlife habitat enhancement, cultural resources protection, etc.) and would be consistent with a trails management plan for the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains (pending).

No Action Alternative (D)

Under this alternative, recreational access needs would be afforded less consideration relative to the Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) in the development of a priority for acquiring non-Federal lands. The extent to which such consideration might result in diminished access is unknown.

**Adaptive Management and Monitoring Program – Implementing the Plan**

Alternative A, B, and C

To the extent that efficiency and effectiveness of plan implementation is enhanced by the strategy proposed under this alternative, benefits to recreational resources identified in this Chapter would be concomitantly realized.

No Action Alternative D

Implementation of actions as funding becomes available could delay realization of benefits to recreational resources identified in this Chapter. If delays result in an irretrievable loss of resource values, recreational resources would likely be adversely affected

#### **4.B.7. Scenic Resources**

Management objectives for visual resources in the National Monument have been established through the CDCA Plan Amendment for the Coachella Valley (BLM) and the San Bernardino National Forest Plan Revision (Forest Service) (Chapter 3, Section 3.H). As this National Monument Plan focuses on management strategies in furtherance of legislative intent and does not identify actions that would result in site-specific surface disturbances, determinations regarding conformance with visual resource management objectives would be made when specific project proposals are under consideration by the affected agency.

#### **4.B.8. Water Resources**

According to the Best Management Practices (BMP) outlined by the Forest Service and the BLM, existing and potential non-point potential water pollution sources will be identified and evaluated to determine the need for and type of treatments necessary to maintain water quality. Lands found to be in need of watershed improvement work will be scheduled for treatment as part of ongoing work/planning/budgeting process. BMP's are designed to synthesize a number of directives into a process to be followed when addressing water quality of management areas. Each BMP consists of (1) objectives, (2) an explanation with general considerations which are incorporated into the planning process of project design and (3) implementation guidelines. For example, prior to initiation of road construction activities, a BMP concerning the timing of construction would be implemented to minimize erosion and sedimentation. An additional BMP to control traffic during wet periods would further aid in limiting the potential damage to water quality.

#### **Biological Resources – Habitat Management – Management of Noxious, Non-native, and Invasive Plant Species**

##### **Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)**

Developing a plan to eradicate noxious, non-native and invasive plant species throughout the National Monument would benefit water resources by removing added stressors from the ecosystem. The removal of tamarisk provides a benefit to native plants because removing tamarisk and other non-native species removes these plants from competing with native vegetation for precious water resources. Working with neighboring cities to educate the public about xeriscaping and landscaping would benefit the water resources throughout the National Monument.

##### **No Action Alternative (D)**

Continuing to coordinate with Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians and other partners to eradicate tamarisk within the National Monument will have a positive impact on water resources.

#### **Biological Resources – Management of Special Species**

##### **Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)**

Coordinating special species management with partners provides a positive benefit to water resources as it adds to our understanding of species needs related to water resources in the National Monument.

##### **No Action Alternative (D)**

The No Action Alternative would not impact water resources within the National Monument.

### **Biological Resources – Monitoring Program**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Coordinating monitoring of species with partners provides a positive benefit to water resources as it adds to our understanding of species occurrences related to water resources in the National Monument.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

The No Action Alternative would not impact water resources within the National Monument; however, without a coordinated monitoring effort, information will not be shared among partners and the length of time it takes to understand species occurrences will be longer.

### **Cultural Resources Strategy – Including Research, Inventory, etc.**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

The Preferred Plan would not impact water resources. The No Action Alternative would not impact water resources within the National Monument

### **Recreation Resources - Strategic Recreation Management Plan**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

The initiation of a strategic recreation management plan would not impact water resources. A future plan would help manage activities as they relate to recreational use near water resources in the National Monument and would help our ability to manage water resources.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

The No Action Alternative would not impact water resources within the National Monument

### **Recreational Resources – Hang Gliding**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative B), Alternative A, C, and No Action (D)

The Preferred Plan and all alternatives would not impact water resources within the National Monument.

### **Recreational Resources – Recreational Paintball**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

The prohibition of paintball within the National Monument would not adversely impact water resources within the National Monument. The prohibition may provide a future benefit to water resources by disallowing a potential source of water pollution.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

The No Action Alternative continues to allow paintball within the National Monument. This may adversely impact water resources in the future, should the National Monument become a popular paintball area.

### **Recreational Resources – Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (PCT)**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

The Preferred Plan and all other alternatives would provide no impacts to water resources.

### **Recreational Resources – Recreational Shooting**

Preferred Plan (Alternative C)

The preferred plan would not adversely impact water resources within the National Monument. Prohibiting use of weapons, except for the legal take of game during hunting season, may benefit water resources by reducing the amount of potential pollutants to the water system throughout the National Monument.

Alternative A, B and No Action (D)

Alternative related to shooting in the National Monument and the No Action Alternative would not adversely impact water resources within the National Monument.

**Recreational Resources – Pets - Within Essential Bighorn Sheep Habitat**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

The Preferred Plan and all other alternatives would provide no impacts to water resources.

**Recreational Resources – Pets- Outside Essential Bighorn Sheep Habitat**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

The Preferred Plan and all other alternatives would provide no impacts to water resources.

**Recreational Resources – Feral and Uncontrolled Domestic**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

The Preferred Plan and all other alternatives would provide no impacts to water resources.

**Recreational Resources - Forest Service Adventure Pass**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

The Preferred Plan and all other alternatives would provide no impacts to water resources.

**Geological Resources Strategy –Including Inventory and Mapping, Protection and Preservation, etc.**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

An inventory of the geologic resources of the National Monument would benefit water resources as it would add to our knowledge of the resources that contribute to water quality throughout the National Monument. Increased education to the public would also benefit water resources as it would aid in our ability to teach the public about the resources that exist, thereby including them in smart management practices on adjacent lands to the National Monument.

No Action Alternative (D)

Without an inventory of the geologic resources that exist within the National Monument, long-term management of water resources would be difficult and incomplete. This would adversely impact our ability to protect and preserve water resources.

**Educational Resources Strategy – Including Public Information, Signage, Education and Interpretation**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

The Preferred Plan and all other alternatives would provide no adverse impacts to water resources. Education serves as a tool to inform the public about the protection and

preservation of all resources in the National Monument and would therefore benefit water resources.

#### **Management of Scientific Resources**

##### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

The Preferred Plan and all other alternatives would provide no adverse impacts to water resources. Promoting research of the water resources within the National Monument would benefit the protection and preservation of water resources.

#### **Management of Visitation, Facilities and Uses – Access**

##### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

The Preferred Plan and all other alternatives would provide no impacts to water resources.

#### **Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Private Property Concerns**

##### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

The adoption of the preferred plan would not adversely impact water resources. Improved communication with private property owners within and near the National Monument may lead to the adoption of improved land management techniques on non-Federal lands, thereby improving water resources. The degree to which positive benefits would occur would be dependent upon the success of water resources-related outreach programs with private property owners.

#### **Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Facility Development**

##### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

The adoption of the preferred plan would not adversely impact water resources. The application of the criteria to future facility development may positively impact water resources, but would be dependent upon actual development decisions.

#### **Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Visitor Use with Regard to Hwy 74**

##### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Establishing an agreement with Caltrans would improve the effectiveness with which all resources are managed along Highway 74, thereby resulting in a benefit to water resources.

##### No Action Alternative (D)

Continued coordination with Caltrans would not adversely impact water resources.

#### **Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Monitoring Visitor Use**

##### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

The preferred plan of monitoring visitors and collecting baseline data of the amount of visitor use within the National Monument would not impact water resources. Management decisions following the collection of baseline data, however, would benefit water resources if visitor use were to be altered such that sensitive water resources could be avoided, etc.

##### No Action Alternative (D)

The No Action Alternative would not impact water resources; however, a lack of baseline data regarding the degree of visitor use within the mountains removes our ability to adaptively manage the water resources within the National Monument. By not documenting current and future usage of sensitive water resource areas, there is no



information to base management decisions on and no method for ensuring protection and preservation of resources.

### **Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Hazards to Facility, Visitor and Public Safety**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

The Preferred Plan and all other alternatives would provide no impacts to water resources. Coordination improves our effectiveness of enforcing allowable uses within the National Monument, and subsequently results in improved protection and preservation of National Monument resources

### **Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Fire Plan**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

The Preferred Plan and all other alternatives would provide no impacts to water resources. Coordination improves our effectiveness of managing fire within the National Monument, and subsequently results in improved protection and preservation of National Monument resources

### **Water Resources - Surface and Ground Water Resources**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

An inventory of the groundwater and surface water resources of the National Monument would benefit water resources, as it would add to our knowledge of the resources that contribute to water quality throughout the National Monument. A compiled list of all water resources in the National Monument, on both Federal and non-Federal lands, would benefit water resources in the National Monument because it would increase our knowledge of the resources that BLM and Forest Service would protect and preserve and would identify water resources that exist outside of Federal lands in the National Monument. Coordinated management among partners in times of drought would benefit water resources.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

By not working with partners to identify all the water resources that exist within the National Monument, long-term management of water resources would be difficult and incomplete. This would adversely impact our ability to protect and preserve water resources.

### **Acquisition Strategy - Acquisition Criteria**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

The Preferred Plan and all other alternatives would provide no impacts to water resources. Proposed acquisitions would be subject to NEPA review, including assessment of proposed classifications and/or potential impacts on regional water resources and quality.

### **Adaptive Management and Monitoring Program – Implementing the Plan**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Coordinating with partner agencies and Tribes would increase the effectiveness and efficiency of plan implementation. This would benefit water resources.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

Not coordinating with partner agencies and Tribes would extend the length of time required to initiate and complete the preferred plan actions. This would not impact water resources.

#### **4.B.9. Fire Ecology and Management ,Forest Products, and Material Collection**

The proposed strategy for management of noxious, non-native, and invasive plant species would benefit fire ecology by improving efficiency of the removal of potential fuels within the National Monument. Habitat Conservation Objectives as identified through the Coachella Valley CDCA Plan Amendment (Appendix E) and Fire Management Categories applied to BLM lands within the National Monument (Appendix C) are not being amended by this Management Plan, and would not be impacted by any of the actions proposed through this plan. For Forest Service lands, the Standards and Guidelines applied to habitat throughout the National Monument and fire and fuels management is not being amended through this Management Plan. No actions proposed in this Management Plan would impact the current BLM and Forest Service ability to manage fires. The proposal to complete a coordinated fire management plan to include all those with fire management responsibility within the bounds of the National Monument would benefit fire management because it would improve the efficiency of current efforts. The proposal to continue to build relationships with private property owners within the bounds of the National Monument would increase BLM and Forest Service ability to educate and include the public in fire management. The development of a defensible structures map of buildings within the National Monument would result in greater ability to limit damage to structures in the National Monument.

No changes to Forest Products and Materials Collection policies were included as legislative requirements. One change to material collection is discussed in the Geologic Resources section of this plan: the collection of “tufa” would be prohibited from BLM-managed lands in the National Monument under the Preferred Plan Alternative. Collection of rare plants would continue to be prohibited and collection of plants and animals would continue to require necessary permits. All other materials will continue to be available for collection consistent with applicable BLM or Forest Service policy and regulations. The scale and intensity of collecting has been small within the National Monument. The Cultural Resources Preferred Plan includes adopting a protocol for facilitating traditional material gathering for interested Tribes. This would provide a benefit to Tribal relations regarding the collection of traditional materials. Geologic Resources Preferred Plan Alternative includes monitoring Geologic Resources. This would enable BLM and Forest Service to identify baseline levels of casual rock collecting within the National Monument. This would provide a positive benefit to material collections in that it would allow for improved management of resources within the National Monument. The Educational Resources Strategy would provide benefit to Forest Products and materials collection by developing informational brochures and webpage information regarding what is and what is not acceptable casual collecting and what types of collecting require permits.

#### **4.B.10. Livestock Grazing**

The designation of the National Monument did not affect the 3,167 acres of grazing allotment that currently exists within the National Monument. No actions proposed through this plan provide any impacts to grazing management on the Forest Service.

Analysis of impacts of actions to that grazing allotment will be addressed in the San Bernardino National Forest Plan Revision (in progress).

Management of noxious, invasive weeds in beneficial for current grazing and working dogs will be addressed through a permit basis. Control of feral dogs is beneficial to grazing management, as management of feral dogs would minimize harm to grazing animals

#### **4.B.11. Impacts to Transportation/Road/Hwy 74**

As this National Monument Plan focuses on management strategies in furtherance of legislative intent and does not identify actions that specifically affect transportation (except as relate to Highway 74), impacts to transportation systems and associated facilities would not occur. Approval of routes for motorized-vehicle use occurred through the CDCA Plan Amendment for the Coachella Valley (BLM) and the San Bernardino National Forest Plan (Forest Service). Impacts to transportation systems, associated facilities and services were therein addressed.

Relative to Highway 74, coordination between Caltrans, Forest Service, and BLM in addressing the design of safe interpretive opportunities and safe passage would potentially enhance traffic flows and reduce accidents (Preferred Plan, Alternative A, B, and C). The extent to which these benefits would be realized is not known, as it would depend on the effectiveness of the coordination effort. Continued input to Caltrans regarding maintenance needs and safety in a less-structured manner (No Action Alternative D) would result in similar benefits, though perhaps in a different timeframe depending on responsiveness to identified needs.

#### **4.B.12. Utility and Public Services**

No adverse impacts to utilities or public facilities would result from any of the Alternatives proposed or the No Action Alternative. This National Monument Plan does not propose any actions that would affect the process by which BLM and Forest Service address utilities. Both BLM and Forest Service address the need for utilities on a case-by-case basis with analysis of impacts to the environment occurring through the National Environmental Policy Act process. Future utility rights-of-way must be compatible with habitat conservation objectives and visual resource management classes as identified in the Coachella Valley CDCA Plan Amendment and Standards and Guidelines as identified through the San Bernardino National Forest Management Plan (1989, as amended) and the Forest Plan Revision (in progress.)

The Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) for addressing private property concerns establishes a strategy for increased communication with neighboring land owners, providing a positive impact to BLM and Forest Service regarding communication about local utility management. The proposed defensible structures map provides a positive impact to facilities because it would highlight utility structures as structures within the National Monument that should be defended in case of emergency.

#### **4.B.13. Wilderness**

There are three Wilderness areas administered by BLM or Forest Service within the National Monument. The San Jacinto Wilderness was established in 1964, with additional acres added in 1984 by the California Desert Act and consists of 19,470 acres administered by the Forest Service. This act also set aside the Santa Rosa Wilderness administered by Forest Service, which consists of 19,431 acres. BLM added the Santa

Rosa Wilderness Additions in 1994 under the California Desert Protection Act. Santa Rosa Wilderness Additions within the National Monument cover 47,794 acres. (Figure 4)

**Biological Resources – Habitat Management – Management of Noxious, Non-native, and Invasive Plant Species**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Inventorizing public lands to determine distribution of indigenous plant species and non-native species would have no effect on wilderness resources. The development of an action plan to eradicate non-native plants, noxious weeds, and invasive species, and development of a revegetation plan for introducing indigenous species would likewise have no effect on wilderness resources.

Vegetative manipulation projects for fish and wildlife purposes may be approved if they do not degrade wilderness character, if they correct conditions that are a result of human influence, or if they promote the perpetuation of a threatened or endangered species. Management and control of non-native, noxious weeds, and invasive species is consistent with Forest Service Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Wilderness Management Plans, and the Forest Service Implementation Plan for the Santa Rosa Wilderness (BLM has not developed a management plan for the Santa Rosa Wilderness) (Appendix H). Revegetation would only be allowed in rare instances in wilderness e.g., after disturbances, such as wildfire, to restore essential food plants to a wilderness where the natural process of healing is not expected to occur—actions of this type may be allowed only to enhance wilderness values and not to optimize habitat needs of any single wildlife species to the detriment of wildlife diversity in an untrammelled environment. Impacts to wilderness resources from vegetative manipulation, including reintroduction of indigenous species, would be determined when specific actions are identified through the plan(s) identified for development under this alternative.

Educating the public regarding the use of non-native, invasive species for landscaping and decorative plantings may have a beneficial effect on wilderness values. To the extent that such an educational program contributes to a reduction in the spread of invasive species and facilitates the natural growth of indigenous species in wilderness, the wilderness character of the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Wilderness areas would be enhanced. However, the extent to which such benefits would be realized is unknown.

Preparing an annual report that describes non-native, invasive plant treatments and accomplishments would have no effect on wilderness resources. However, public distribution of the report could have similar effects as described above relative to the education program.

No Action Alternative (D)

Current efforts to eradicate invasive weeds have likely benefited wilderness resources, though to an unknown extent. To the extent that a shift in the balance between indigenous and non-natural plants has improved habitat for native animal and insect species, and numbers and distribution of such species have concomitantly increased, wilderness values would be enhanced. These benefits would be expected to continue with an on-going program of tamarisk eradication.

**Biological Resources – Management of Special Species**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

The Preferred Plan would have no direct effect on wilderness resources. A comprehensive inventory of plant and animal species (providing it is conducted without use of motorized or mechanized equipment, and occurs in an unobtrusive manner by methods compatible with the preservation of the area's wilderness character), collaborative management of special status species, and encouragement of research would not, in and of themselves, enhance or diminish wilderness values. However, collaborative management of special status species would enhance wilderness values if it leads to an increase in numbers and distribution of species currently listed as threatened or endangered. For example, Peninsular Ranges bighorn sheep constitute a wilderness value of the Santa Rosa Wilderness. If collaborative management expedites recovery of the species, enhanced wilderness values therein would be realized sooner.

Research is a valid and important use of the wilderness resource. Research is permitted and encouraged as long as all projects are conducted in such a manner as to preserve the area's wilderness character and they further the management, scientific, educational, historical, and conservation purposes of the area. Research in wilderness must be conducted without use of motorized equipment or construction of temporary or permanent structures, and in an unobtrusive manner by methods compatible with the preservation of the area's wilderness character. Exceptions to this policy may be approved for projects that are essential to managing the wilderness when no other feasible alternatives exist. Impacts to wilderness resources from research would be determined when specific projects are proposed and authorizations are sought.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

The No Action Alternative is similar to the Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) except that inventories of plant and animal species are accomplished on a project-specific basis instead of through a comprehensive National Monument -wide inventory. This difference in approach to the inventory of plants and animals within wilderness would have no effect on wilderness resources providing it is conducted without use of motorized or mechanized equipment, and occurs in an unobtrusive manner by methods compatible with the preservation of the area's wilderness character. Impacts to wilderness resources from such inventories would be determined when specific projects are proposed.

Current collaboration in the management of special status species has supported recovery efforts for threatened and endangered species, thereby enhancing wilderness values. For example, the increasing population of Peninsular Ranges bighorn sheep over the last several years in the Santa Rosa Wilderness has enhanced wilderness values. This enhancement of values would be expected to continue with ongoing collaboration.

Impacts to wilderness resources from research would be determined when specific projects are proposed and authorizations are sought.

#### **Biological Resources – Monitoring Program**

##### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Participation in the development of an interagency monitoring program would have no effect on wilderness resources. Upon program development and identification of specific monitoring actions, effects on wilderness resources would be analyzed. Impacts to wilderness resources would also be addressed upon identification of management actions developed in response to monitoring results.

No Action Alternative (D)

Impacts to wilderness resources from monitoring activities developed in conformance with the CDCA Plan's Land Health Standards, Habitat Conservation Objectives, and Peninsular Ranges bighorn sheep strategy and Forest Service Standards and Guidelines would be determined when specific actions are identified.

**Cultural Resources Strategy – Including Research, Inventory, etc.**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

The inventory, evaluation, and monitoring of cultural resources within the National Monument, as well as the development of a cultural resources management plan, would have no direct effect on wilderness resources, providing on-the-ground activities are conducted without use of motorized or mechanized equipment, and occur in an unobtrusive manner by methods compatible with the preservation of the area's wilderness character. Impacts to wilderness resources from such inventories and monitoring efforts would be determined when specific projects are proposed. If preservation and restoration needs, as well as mitigation actions, were identified in the cultural resources management plan, impacts to wilderness resources would be analyzed at that time.

Impacts to wilderness resources would be determined upon identification of specific actions in wilderness to interpret historic and prehistoric through the use of "magnet" sites. The wilderness resource will be dominant in all management decisions where a choice must be made between preservation of wilderness character and visitor use.

Development of a policy to provide Tribal member access to gather traditional materials, monitoring the effects of traditional collecting and gathering, and providing for Native American access to ceremonial and religious sites would have no direct effect on wilderness values. Impacts to wilderness resources would be evaluated upon identification of specific policies describing the manner of access to be allowed for Tribal activities in wilderness.

No Action Alternative (D)

Ongoing inventories, evaluations, and monitoring activities related to cultural resources within the National Monument; existing Tribal collecting and gathering of traditional materials; and interpretation of historic and prehistoric resources have resulted in no known impacts to wilderness values. Effects on wilderness resources of new actions along these lines would be determined when projects are proposed.

**Recreation Resources - Strategic Recreation Management Plan**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

The development of a strategic recreation management plan would have no direct effects on wilderness resources. Upon plan development and identification of specific actions, effects on wilderness resources would be analyzed. Impacts to wilderness values contained within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Wilderness areas from the pending trails management plan for the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains, to be incorporated in the strategic plan, would be analyzed through the relevant NEPA document.

No Action Alternative (D)

Impacts to wilderness resources from the management of recreation on an as-needed basis would be determined upon identification of project proposals, subject to existing management plans. Impacts to wilderness values from the pending trails management plan for the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains would be analyzed through the relevant NEPA document.

#### **Recreational Resources – Hang Gliding**

##### Preferred Plan (Alternative B), Alternative A, C, and No Action (D)

Hang gliding is a prohibited activity in designated wilderness. Therefore, wilderness resources would not be affected under alternative management scenarios that address this activity.

#### **Recreational Resources – Recreational Paintball**

##### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Prohibiting paintball activities on BLM and Forest Service lands within the National Monument would protect wilderness resources (e.g., vegetative, historic and prehistoric resources) from paintball stains, though the extent of potential benefits is unknown as levels of paintball-related activities in designated wilderness have not been determined.

##### No Action Alternative (D)

Potential threats to wilderness resources on BLM lands in the Santa Rosa Wilderness would remain unchanged, though the level of threat is unknown as the occurrence of such activities in wilderness has not been determined. The San Bernardino National Forest has a special order, 36CFR261.58(m), which “prohibits discharging a firearm, air rifle (BB gun or gas gun), except for the lawful taking of birds and animals, except in areas designated as open by the recreational shooting map.” Paint ball guns operate on gas. Most of the San Jacinto and Santa Rosa Wildernesses are within State Game Refuges, which prohibit possession of firearms.

#### **Recreational Resources – Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (PCT)**

##### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Establishing a 500-foot corridor along the PCT and requiring coordination with the Pacific Trail Association (PCTA) when management activities are proposed within the corridor would provide for greater protection of recreational values associated with the Trail in furtherance of the National Trails System Act (Public Law 90-543, as amended), thereby maintaining opportunities for primitive and unconfined types of recreation enjoyed on Forest Service lands in the San Jacinto Wilderness. The PCT does not traverse any wilderness lands managed by the BLM in the National Monument.

##### No Action Alternative (D)

Effects of this alternative would be similar to those described for the Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C), except that the area of consideration relative to the PCT’s recreational wilderness values, hence the “trigger” for coordination with the PCTA, would be less-clearly defined.

#### **Recreational Resources – Recreational Shooting**

##### Preferred Plan (Alternative C), Alternative A, and B

Restricting recreational shooting on Federal lands within the National Monument to designated areas would benefit wilderness resources to the extent that impacts often associated from such an activity (e.g., uncollected litter in the form of bullet casings and targets, and the shooting of natural, historic and prehistoric resources) are reduced

where shooting is not currently prohibited. Most Forest Service lands within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Wilderness areas, because they occur within State game refuges, as well as certain BLM lands in the Santa Rosa Wilderness that occur within a State game, are currently closed to recreational shooting. As the current level of such impacts on BLM lands in the Santa Rosa Wilderness has not been established, the extent of benefits to be accrued from such restriction is unknown.

Further, as the criteria also prohibits the establishment of designated shooting areas where vehicle access has not been approved, it is not likely that such areas would be established immediately adjacent to wilderness areas due to the limited vehicular access in the National Monument (about 2 miles of open routes on BLM lands and 16 miles of open routes on Forest Service lands). Such unlikelihood minimizes the potential for indirect adverse impacts to wilderness solitude from the sounds of discharging firearms occurring outside wilderness boundaries.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

Impacts to wilderness resources on certain BLM lands in the Santa Rosa Wilderness would continue. Typically, impacts associated with recreational shooting include uncollected litter in the form of bullet casings and targets, and the shooting of natural, historic and prehistoric resources. However, the current level of such impacts has not been established. (Most Forest Service lands within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Wilderness areas, because they occur within State game refuges, as well as certain BLM lands in the Santa Rosa Wilderness that occur within a State game refuge, are currently closed to recreational shooting (Figure 4 and 7).)

#### **Recreational Resources – Pets - Within Essential Bighorn Sheep Habitat**

##### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

No impacts to wilderness resources would occur from allowing dogs in designated areas at visitor centers, parking areas, and other developed sites within essential bighorn sheep habitat as no such facilities exist, or would be approved, in designated wilderness. Effects on wilderness values from allowing pets to enter wilderness areas within essential bighorn sheep habitat would be addressed upon development of a trails management plan for the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains (pending).

#### No Action Alternative (D)

Impacts to wilderness resources from managing dogs within bighorn sheep habitat in accordance with the CDCA Plan Amendment for the Coachella Valley would be addressed upon development of a trails management plan for the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains (pending). Current interim management prohibiting dogs on BLM lands east of Palm Canyon, which includes all BLM lands within the Santa Rosa Wilderness, benefits wilderness values concomitant with enhanced populations and distributions of Peninsular Ranges bighorn sheep (see Section 4.B.3, Impacts to Fish and Wildlife, Special Status Species, and Vegetation).

#### **Recreational Resources – Pets- Outside Essential Bighorn Sheep Habitat**

##### Preferred Plan (Alternative B)

Requiring that pets be leashed on Forest Service lands in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Wilderness areas maintains current management; this management prescription changes management of pets on BLM lands in the Santa Rosa Wilderness. Impacts to primitive and unconfined types of recreation enjoyed in these wilderness areas (such recreation is considered a wilderness value) would be affected in the same manner as



described in Section 4.B.6, Recreational Resources (except as relates to mountain biking activities which are prohibited in wilderness).

#### Alternative A

Allowing unleashed pets on Forest Service lands in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Wilderness areas changes current management; this management prescription does not change management of pets on BLM lands in the Santa Rosa Wilderness. Impacts to primitive and unconfined types of recreation enjoyed in these wilderness areas (such recreation is considered a wilderness value) would be affected in the same manner as described in Section 4.B.6, Recreational Resources (except as relates to mountain biking activities which are prohibited in wilderness).

#### Alternative C

Restricting pets to paved surfaces and in designated pet areas at developed facilities would constitute a prohibition of pets in designated wilderness. Impacts to primitive and unconfined types of recreation enjoyed in these wilderness areas (such recreation is considered a wilderness value) would be affected in the same manner as described in Section 4.B.6, Recreational Resources (except as relates to mountain biking activities which are prohibited in wilderness).

#### No Action Alternative (D)

Impacts to primitive and unconfined types of recreation enjoyed in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Wilderness areas (such recreation is considered a wilderness value) would be affected in the same manner as described in Section 4.B.6, Recreational Resources.

### **Recreational Resources – Feral and Uncontrolled Domestic**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Establishing a protocol for proactive control of feral and uncontrolled domestic animals could enhance a visitor's safety and enjoyment of wilderness resources, concomitantly enhancing unconfined and primitive recreation experiences in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Wilderness areas. Free-roaming dogs in particular, especially when they travel in packs, can strike fear when encountered. In instances when dogs are aggressive, the safety of trail users could be in jeopardy. The extent of such control measures, as well as the magnitude of enhancements to visitor safety and enjoyment, would remain unknown until the protocol is established.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

Addressing feral and uncontrolled domestic animals on an as-needed basis (i.e., acting in response to reported encounters) could result in increased adverse incidents relative to the Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C). Visitor safety and enjoyment of National Monument wilderness resources would be concomitantly diminished.

### **Recreational Resources - Forest Service Adventure Pass**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A and B)

Free parking on BLM lands for noncommercial, noncompetitive activities would continue. Easy access to BLM lands in the Santa Rosa Wilderness would be maintained. Funding for facility development and maintenance (e.g., wilderness kiosks at trailheads) would continue to come from non-fee sources, subject to funding availability, or voluntary contributions if such a program is established. Funding fluctuations could limit the extent and timing of facility maintenance, potentially diminishing the quality of wilderness experiences.

Little revenue is generated from the Adventure Pass program on Forest Service lands within the National Monument. However, Adventure Pass fees currently fund employees who maintain facilities within the National Monument, in part, such as trails and trailheads serving wilderness visitors. Elimination of these fees may result in reduced facility maintenance, thereby diminishing visitor enjoyment of wilderness resources, if funding is not available from non-fee sources. On the other hand, curtailing the Adventure Pass program in the National Monument would eliminate any pre-planning for Pass acquisition, especially for those not possessing an annual Pass, thereby promoting easy access to Forest Service wilderness lands.

#### Alternative C

Fees for parking on BLM lands would generate supplemental funds for site improvements and maintenance (e.g., development and maintenance of trailhead facilities, and maintenance of trails). Site improvements and facility maintenance emanating from expenditures of parking fees would enhance enjoyment of wilderness resources, commensurate with the amount of fees collected.

On the other hand, administrative costs of collecting fees at such remote sites as Martinez Canyon, where vehicle access to the Santa Rosa Wilderness boundary is provided, would likely exceed the amount of fees collected. Further, the requirement to obtain a permit before parking at wilderness trailheads also diminishes ease of access to BLM wilderness lands, perhaps limiting opportunities to enjoy the primitive and unconfined types of recreation therein available.

Continuation of the Adventure Pass program on Forest Service lands would provide funds to sustain current maintenance levels for trails and trailheads serving wilderness visitors, thereby enhancing visitor enjoyment. At the same time, acquisition of an Adventure Pass, especially for those not possessing an annual Pass and needing to go out of their way to purchase a one-day Pass, may thwart ease of access to Forest Service wilderness lands and discourage visitors from enjoying the National Monument's wilderness resources.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

Effects of current parking fee collection within the National Monument (i.e., no fees for parking on BLM lands and an Adventure Pass required for parking on Forest Service lands) would be the same as described under Alternative A and B for BLM lands, and Alternative C for Forest Service lands.

### **Geological Resources Strategy –Including Inventory and Mapping, Protection and Preservation, etc.**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

There is no foreseen impact to the BLM- and Forest Service-managed Santa Rosa Wilderness and the Forest Service-managed San Jacinto Wilderness.

### **Educational Resources Strategy – Including Public Information, Signage, Education and Interpretation**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Dissemination of information about wilderness resources, as well as the development of interpretive and educational displays and programs to increase visitor understanding of such resources, could enhance protection of such values by reducing potential for

inappropriate visitor behavior. Increased knowledge about the natural and cultural resources found within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Wilderness areas also could result in greater appreciation and enjoyment of them, thereby enhancing unconfined and primitive recreational experiences in the backcountry.

No Action Alternative (D)

Current dissemination of information, and provision of interpretive and educational programs and materials would continue to enhance resource protection and recreational experiences in wilderness in similar fashion to that described under the Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C), though to a lesser extent commensurate with an effort of lesser magnitude.

**Management of Scientific Resources**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Providing relevant research information on the Internet, as well as incorporating research with interpretive programs, enhances visitor understanding of wilderness resources. Improved understanding of wilderness resource issues through research could result in greater sensitivity to the impacts that visitor use may have on the resources themselves; such understanding may contribute to the protection of wilderness resource values.

No Action Alternative (D)

Although the reporting of research results is required in conjunction with issuance of a research permit, the lack of a strategy to disseminate relevant research information does nothing to enhance visitor understanding of wilderness resources. However, it is anticipated that such information would, at some point, be made available to the public. Hence, benefits would be similar to those discussed for the Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C), though perhaps slower in being realized.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities and Uses – Access Across Private Property**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Securing legal access across non-federal lands through easements, acquisition, agreements, and/or Memoranda of Understanding would ensure long-term enjoyment of the National Monument's wilderness resources. Restricting use of certain areas or trails due to non-federal landowner actions (e.g., posting of "No Trespassing" signs) would be minimized or eliminated to the extent that such legal access can be secured. Whether or where non-federal landowners would restrict public access to the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Wilderness areas in the future is unknown.

No Action Alternative (D)

Securing legal access to wilderness areas on a case-by-case basis absent a strategy that focuses on key entry points could result in the loss of recreational wilderness opportunities where non-federal landowners take action to restrict public access. Whether such restrictions would occur in the future is unknown.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Private Property Concerns**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Protection, enhancement, and restoration of resources on private lands through collaborative efforts would maintain or enhance protection of wilderness resources. For example, where native plants on private lands are protected and/or non-native vegetation is eradicated, thereby contributing to reestablishment of indigenous species

and eradication of exotic species on BLM and Forest Service wilderness lands, wilderness values are concomitantly protected or enhanced.

No Action Alternative (D)

Continuing current outreach efforts and addressing private property conflicts with wilderness management goals in the National Monument on a case-by-case basis would similarly affect wilderness resources as described for the Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C), though to a lesser degree than the more-developed strategy as therein identified.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses –Facility Development**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

Actions described under all alternatives would have little to no impact on wilderness resources. Except in certain instances where facilities would be necessary for the health and safety of wilderness visitors, or for the protection of wilderness resources, facility development in designated wilderness is prohibited.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Visitor Use with Regard to Hwy 74**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

Actions described under all alternatives would have no effect on wilderness resources. Activities on Highway 74 do not affect resources in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Wilderness areas.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Monitoring Visitor Use**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Monitoring visitor use currently occurs on BLM and Forest Service lands in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Wilderness areas. An emphasis on monitoring visitor use within the National Monument could provide for greater frequency and expanded coverage of data collection, thereby enhancing visitor management and resource protection in wilderness.

No Action Alternative (D)

Monitoring visitor use currently occurs on BLM and Forest Service lands in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Wilderness areas. Benefits from such monitoring would be similar to those described for the Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C), i.e., acquisition of visitor use data contributes to effective visitor management and resource protection in wilderness.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Hazards to Facility, Visitor and Public Safety**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Improving emergency responses through the coordinated efforts of BLM, Forest Service, Riverside County Mounted Police, and Desert Sheriff's Search and Rescue would enhance visitor safety within the National Monument. Safer visits would enhance the quality of visitor enjoyment of wilderness resources.

No Action Alternative (D)

Addressing hazards to visitor safety on a agency-by-agency basis without coordination would reduce the effectiveness of a hazard reduction program, thereby reducing visitor safety within wilderness areas relative to the Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C).

### **Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Fire Plan**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

BLM and Forest Service management guidance requires that fire management activities in wilderness be conducted in a manner compatible with wilderness management objectives. In addition to wilderness management objectives, the following considerations must be addressed in a comprehensive fire management plan that applies to wilderness: historic fire occurrence, natural role of fire, proposed degree of suppression, expected fire behavior, acceptable suppression techniques, smoke management, and effects on adjacent landowners. Such considerations would assure that adverse impacts to wilderness resources are minimized as a result of fire management activities.

### **Water Resources - Surface and Ground Water Resources**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Coordination with water management agencies and water users to enhance management of surface and ground water, including commencing inventories and monitoring efforts to identify water sources and their quality, as well as locating potential pollution sources, could result in greater protection of wilderness water resources, thereby maintaining or enhancing wilderness values, though to an unknown extent.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

Effects of current water management practices in wilderness would be similar to those described for the Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C), though potentially to a lesser extent because coordination efforts with other entities that have water management responsibilities would be less formalized.

### **Acquisition Strategy - Acquisition Criteria**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

Retention of Federal lands within designated wilderness, and acquisition of non-Federal lands therein, continues to be a high priority. Acquisition of non-Federal lands in wilderness would reduce potential threats to resource values therein as private landowners' use and enjoyment of their properties would no longer constitute potential sources of adverse impacts. Such impacts could stem from motorized-vehicle access across Federal lands and facility development within the privately owned parcel of land.

### **Adaptive Management and Monitoring Program – Implementing the Plan**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

To the extent that efficiency and effectiveness of plan implementation is enhanced by the strategy proposed under this alternative, benefits to wilderness resources identified in this Chapter would be concomitantly realized.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

Implementation of actions as funding becomes available could delay realization of benefits to wilderness resources identified in this Chapter.

#### **4.B.14. Social and Economic Conditions**

### **Biological Resources – Habitat Management – Management of Noxious, Non-native, and Invasive Plant Species**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Impacts to social and economic conditions associated with the management of noxious and non-native plants are expected to be minimal. Potential beneficial impacts could

result to surrounding communities if eradication actions require contracting with local pest control providers. Since funding sources and implementation measures will be evolving and changing over time, these potential beneficial impacts cannot be quantified at this time.

No Action Alternative (D)

Individual and task force efforts would continue as currently undertaken. No change in social and economic conditions would occur.

**Biological Resources – Management of Special Species**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

There is no foreseeable impact to social and economic conditions associated with management of special species.

No Action Alternative (D)

There is no foreseeable impact to social and economic conditions associated with management of special species.

**Biological Resources – Monitoring Program**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

There is no foreseeable impact to social and economic conditions associated with the monitoring program.

No Action Alternative (D)

There is no foreseeable impact to social and economic conditions associated with the monitoring program.

**Cultural Resources Strategy – Including Research, Inventory, etc.**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

There is no anticipated direct impact to social and economic conditions associated with the management of cultural resources. However, a number of indirect impacts can be anticipated, primarily associated with tourism use of the National Monument. The Plan proposes the creation of access protocols for culturally significant sites, and the prohibition of access for other sites. Access to such sites is likely to result in increased visitation to the National Monument, and thereby increase economic benefits to the surrounding communities in the form of increased sales and hotel room nights, both of which generate both jobs for the community, and taxes for the local jurisdiction.

The social importance of the National Monument to local Tribes is considerable. The management plan proposes to continue to allow such access for social, religious and cultural purposes, so that no impact should occur.

The lack of access for tourism has the potential to reduce visitation and the associated secondary economic impacts described in the previous paragraph. In addition, the social benefits associated with the education of the public on culturally significant resources in the area will be lost if some controlled access is not made available.

An on-going, balanced approach to the culturally significant sites within the National Monument will result in beneficial impact associated with social and economic conditions.

No Action Alternative (D)

Plans already in place by both the BLM and the Forest Service will result in similar impacts to cultural resources as those described above.

**Recreation Resources - Strategic Recreation Management Plan**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

Limited potential impacts associated with social and economic conditions are expected due to the drafting of the management plan. Trail use within the National Monument is already regulated to a great extent, and will be regulated in the future through the management plan. Should the management plan eliminate trail use, a potentially significant economic impact could be expected, since the use of trails is a popular tourist activity, and such tourism might be lost should trail use not be available.

No Action Alternative (D)

Recreational trails are currently regulated by a number of plans, which will remain in effect. The impacts associated with the no action alternative are expected to be negligible, since no change in current conditions would occur.

**Recreational Resources – Hang Gliding**

Preferred Plan (Alternative B) and Alternative C

The prohibition of hang gliding in the National Monument would result in a loss of economic benefit to surrounding communities, especially since hang gliding is a destination sport. Those who participate in it, however, are very limited in number. The potential secondary impacts associated with the elimination of hang gliding opportunities is not expected to have a significant impact on social or economic conditions.

Alternative A

The continuation of hang gliding from areas of the National Monument, including Vista Point, would result in the continuation of current conditions, although permitting and other restrictions would be imposed. These restrictions are not expected to have any impact on hang gliding. Alternative A would therefore not be expected to impact social or economic conditions.

No Action Alternative (D)

This alternative would result in a continuation of existing activities, and therefore would not be expected to have any impact on social or economic conditions.

**Recreational Resources – Recreational Paintball**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

The prohibition of paintball on National Monument lands is not likely to significantly impact social or economic conditions. It is unlikely that significant numbers of persons would participate in the activity in the National Monument in the future, and their economic impact on any of the surrounding communities would be expected to be negligible.

No Action Alternative (D)

Paintball is not currently disallowed within the National Monument, and is not known to be a highly practiced activity. Its continuation might have a slight beneficial impact on the economic condition of surrounding communities, but this impact is expected to be negligible.

### **Recreational Resources – Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (PCT)**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

The changes proposed in the management of the PCT would have no impact on social or economic conditions, since no significant changes will occur as a result of this change. The No Action Alternative would result in a continuation of existing activities, and therefore would not be expected to have any impact on social or economic conditions.

### **Recreational Resources – Recreational Shooting**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative C)

The prohibition of recreational shooting on National Monument lands is not likely to significantly impact social or economic conditions. It is unlikely that significant numbers of persons would participate in the activity in the future, and their economic impact on any of the surrounding communities would be expected to be negligible.

#### (Alternative A & B)

Allowing recreational shooting, either at designated sites or as a dispersed activity within the National Monument will not significantly impact social or economic conditions, insofar as the activity is currently permitted, and although restrictions would be imposed, they would not be sufficiently restrictive to discourage the activity. Therefore, the existing secondary economic impacts associated with shooting would continue as they currently occur.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

This alternative would result in a continuation of existing activities, and therefore would not be expected to have any impact on social or economic conditions.

### **Recreational Resources – Pets - Within Essential Bighorn Sheep Habitat**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

The limitations placed on pets would not represent a social or economic impact, insofar as prohibitions already occur, and the inability of hikers to take their dogs is not likely to significantly impact trail usage, or the secondary economic effects associated with hiking.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

This alternative would result in a continuation of existing activities, and therefore would not be expected to have any impact on social or economic conditions.

### **Recreational Resources – Pets- Outside Essential Bighorn Sheep Habitat**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative B), Alternative A and C

The limitations placed on pets under all three of these alternatives would not represent a social or economic impact, insofar as prohibitions already occur, and the limitation of leashes or location for hikers to take their dogs is not likely to significantly impact trail usage, or the secondary economic effects associated with hiking.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

This alternative would result in a continuation of existing activities, and therefore would not be expected to have any impact on social or economic conditions.

### **Recreational Resources – Feral and Uncontrolled Domestic Animals**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)



These alternatives would not be expected to have any impact on social or economic conditions.

No Action Alternative (D)

This alternative would result in a continuation of existing activities, and therefore would not be expected to have any impact on social or economic conditions.

**Recreational Resources - Forest Service Adventure Pass**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A and B)

These alternatives would result in a potential loss of revenues for the Forest Service, and therefore could have a negative impact on its ability to provide services. Conversely, these alternatives would have no impact on BLM resources, since no fee is currently charged. Since the fee is in existence today, the alternatives would not impact social or economic conditions in surrounding communities, since activities would continue as they currently occur.

(Alternative C)

This alternative would result in a potential beneficial impact to the BLM, insofar as it does not currently receive revenue for access to its lands. The alternative would have no impact on Forest Service resources, since the fee is currently charged. The alternative may have a slight impact on surrounding communities, insofar as additional fees might be paid by campers or hikers for access to lands on which a fee is not currently collected, but this potential impact is expected to be negligible.

No Action Alternative (D)

This alternative would result in a continuation of existing activities, and therefore would not be expected to have any impact on social or economic conditions.

**Geological Resources Strategy –Including Inventory and Mapping, Protection and Preservation, etc.**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

There is no foreseeable impact to social and economic conditions associated with mapping and inventory of geologic resources. The proposed outreach and interpretation program could have a minor beneficial impact on social and economic conditions, insofar as an increase in the number of persons visiting the area could occur, and they could increase revenues for surrounding communities. This impact, however, is not expected to be significant, since the increased numbers of persons is not expected to be significant.

No Action Alternative (D)

This alternative would result in a continuation of existing activities, and therefore would not be expected to have any impact on social or economic conditions.

**Educational Resources Strategy – Including Public Information, Signage, Education and Interpretation**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

These alternatives result in an increased public awareness of National Monument facilities and activities, which could have a beneficial impact on social and economic conditions. A comprehensive public education and outreach program could result in greater awareness and interest in the National Monument, and in turn an increase in visitation. Such an increase, depending on the numbers of visitors added to the area,

could have a significant beneficial impact on surrounding communities' economic conditions, particularly through increases in sales and transient occupancy revenues. It is not possible to quantify the possible increase at this time, however, a considerably more aggressive public relations effort could substantially increase the visitors to the area.

Finally, the development and dissemination of informational handouts, brochures and signage could also benefit surrounding communities, insofar as local providers could be contracted to complete the work. Since the level of activity in this area is not expected to be significant, the potential beneficial impact is also expected to be limited.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

This alternative would result in a continuation of existing activities, and therefore would not be expected to have any impact on social or economic conditions.

### **Management of Scientific Resources**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

These preferred plan alternatives would not be expected to have any impact on social or economic conditions. This No Action Alternative would result in a continuation of existing activities, and therefore would not be expected to have any impact on social or economic conditions.

### **Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Access**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

These alternatives propose that easements or acquisitions be undertaken to secure access. The BLM and Forest Service will compensate private landowners, when appropriate, for these easements and acquisitions. These alternatives, therefore, are expected to result in beneficial impacts to economic conditions.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

This alternative would result in a continuation of existing activities, and therefore would not be expected to have any impact on social or economic conditions.

### **Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Private Property Concerns**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

These alternatives are not expected to have significant impacts on social or economic conditions. Private property owners within and adjacent to the planning area will benefit from the increased efforts of the BLM and Forest Service in outreach and cooperation, which would improve social conditions for those land owners. The resolution of conflicts with private property owners represents a beneficial social impact associated with implementation of these alternatives.

#### No Action Alternative (D)

This alternative would result in a continuation of existing activities, and therefore would not be expected to have any impact on social or economic conditions.

### **Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses –Facility Development**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

The development of new facilities could represent a beneficial economic impact, insofar as contracts will be let when new facilities are constructed, which could be secured by the businesses and residents in surrounding communities, thus increasing their

revenues. The contracts could range from services and professional activities, to construction and maintenance contracts. Most services and materials are likely to be available within the surrounding communities, and should not require contractors out of the area. The local beneficial impact also extends to multiplier impacts – those associated with second and third tier sales due to the increase in sales of the direct contractor.

No Action Alternative (D)

This alternative would result in a continuation of existing activities, and therefore would not be expected to have any impact on social or economic conditions.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Visitor Use with Regard to Hwy 74**  
Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

These alternatives are expected to have only limited impacts associated with social or economic conditions. The construction of interpretive sites along Highway 74 could result in beneficial impacts to businesses in surrounding communities. Improvements to the roadway, should they occur in the future, will improve road safety, which would represent a beneficial social impact. No other impacts associated with these alternatives are anticipated.

No Action Alternative (D)

This alternative would result in a continuation of existing activities, and therefore would not be expected to have any impact on social or economic conditions.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Monitoring Visitor Use**  
Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

These alternatives would not be expected to have any impact on social or economic conditions.

No Action Alternative (D)

This alternative would result in a continuation of existing activities, and therefore would not be expected to have any impact on social or economic conditions.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Hazards to Facility, Visitor and Public Safety**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

These alternatives would not be expected to have any impact on social or economic conditions.

No Action Alternative (D)

This alternative would result in a continuation of existing activities, and therefore would not be expected to have any impact on social or economic conditions.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Fire Plan**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

These alternatives are not expected to have direct impacts on social or economic conditions. Indirectly, however, the development of a Fire Management Plan would have beneficial impacts, insofar as the proper fire management of the National Monument will lower the occurrence of fires, which are expensive for the surrounding jurisdictions.

No Action Alternative (D)

This alternative would result in a continuation of existing activities, and therefore would not be expected to have any impact on social or economic conditions.

#### **Water Resources - Surface and Ground Water Resources**

##### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

These alternatives would not be expected to have any impact on social or economic conditions.

The No Action Alternative would result in a continuation of existing activities, and therefore would not be expected to have any impact on social or economic conditions.

#### **Acquisition Strategy - Acquisition Criteria**

##### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

The development of criteria for land acquisition will not, in and of itself, impact social or economic conditions. The acquisitions themselves, however, will have a beneficial economic impact on surrounding communities, insofar as revenues from the sales would flow to local jurisdictions.

#### **Adaptive Management and Monitoring Program – Implementing the Plan**

##### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C)

The implementation plan for the National Monument will not, in and of itself, have any impact on social or economic conditions in surrounding communities. The components of the plan implemented will have impacts as listed in the sections above, and these impacts can generally be characterized as beneficial for social and economic conditions.

##### No Action Alternative (D)

This alternative is not expected to have an impact on social or economic conditions.

#### **4.B.15. Environmental Justice and Health Impacts to Children**

Executive Order 12898 of February 11, 1994 as amended by Executive Order 12948 provides that “each Federal agency make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations.” Environmental justice refers to the fair and equitable treatment of all individuals, regardless of race, ethnicity or income level, in the development and implementation of environmental laws and policies. This concept applies to governmental actions at all levels -- local, State and Federal -- as well as private industry activities. Providing environmental justice includes a guarantee of equal access to relief and meaningful community participation with government and industry decision-makers. The management strategies and alternatives in this Draft Management Plan comply with Executive Order 12898 as amended and there will be no disproportionately high effects on minority, low-income populations or Indian Tribes as a result of the preferred plan.

#### **Biological Resources – Habitat Management – Management of Noxious, Non-native, and Invasive Plant Species; and Management of Special Species; and Resources – Monitoring Program**

##### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

The proposed plan is intended to reduce the spread of non-native and invasive plant species and to foster the reintroduction of native plants. Updating the inventory of biological species that occur within the National Monument would increase our knowledge of the species existing within the bounds of the National Monument.

Continuing to coordinate with partner agencies in the monitoring of biological species would increase our understanding of spatial and temporal shifts in populations. This would reduce adverse impacts to vegetation and biological species, which would indirectly benefit all human populations.

**Cultural Resources Strategy – Including Research, Inventory, etc.**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

Research, inventory, and monitoring of cultural resources within the National Monument would not adversely affect any segment of the population and would benefit Tribes by including Tribal members in inventory and monitoring through site steward programs. Involving Tribes in developing interpretive materials will positively benefit Tribes by ensuring that BLM and Forest Service are developing interpretive materials that properly characterize Tribal history. Developing a policy for traditional material gathering would benefit tribes by facilitating access for gathering to those tribes who express an interest in using such a policy. Proposed coordination with Tribes via a Cultural Working Group would benefit Tribes by providing an avenue for communication with Forest Service and BLM. No Action Alternative would not adversely impact any segment of the population.

**Recreation Resources - Strategic Recreation Management Plan**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action Alternative

Developing a comprehensive recreation plan would apply to all segments of the population, regardless of racial, economic, or other characterizations. Limitations of use to be established by that plan will apply to all trail users and continued use of trails until such time that a Strategic Recreation Plan is developed would not adversely or disproportionately impact minorities or special populations.

**Recreational Resources – Hang Gliding**

Preferred Plan (Alternative B), Alternative A, B and No Action Alternative

Every strategy provided regarding hang gliding would apply to all segments of the population and would not adversely or disproportionately impact minorities or special populations.

**Recreational Resources – Recreational Paintball**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

Prohibiting paintball throughout the National Monument would apply to all segments of the population, regardless of racial, economic, or other characterizations. Limiting this recreational use would benefit all segments of the community and would limit potential adverse health impacts to children because it would reduce the potential for materials associated with paintball being to be deposited on Federal lands.

**Recreational Resources – Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (PCT)**

Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

The designation of a 500-foot wide management corridor along the PCT is beneficial to all segments of the population as it provides for greater communication between agencies and potentially more effective and efficient management.

**Recreational Resources – Recreational Shooting**

Preferred Plan (Alternative C), Alternative A, B, and No Action D

Limitations to shooting would apply to all segments of the population and would not disproportionately impact minorities or special populations. Hunting would continue to be allowed under California Department of Fish and Game codes. Prohibiting recreational

shooting in the National Monument outside of hunting season locales reduces the chance of accidental shooting related injuries involving children.

### **Recreational Resources – Pets - Within and Outside Essential Bighorn Sheep Habitat**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

The proposed plan applies to all segments of the population and does not disproportionately impact any segment of the community. Assistance dogs would be allowed and working dogs would be addressed via special use permits.

### **Recreational Resources – Feral and Uncontrolled Domestic Animals**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

The proposed plan is intended to create a safer visitor experience throughout the National Monument, providing a beneficial impact to segments of the community. The proposed plan would not adversely or disproportionately impact any segment of the human population.

### **Recreational Resources - Forest Service Adventure Pass**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A and B), Alternative C and No Action (D)

All of the alternatives included here would apply to all segments of the population. Requiring a fee permit on BLM lands (Alternative C) would require a fee for vehicles parked on BLM-managed land in the National Monument. This fee may limit some segments of the community from experiencing the National Monument; however, the fee would be required of all persons parking on BLM-managed land in the National Monument and would not be applied to only some segments of the community.

### **Geological Resources Strategy –Including Inventory and Mapping, Protection and Preservation, etc.**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

No alternatives presented here would adversely affect minority, children, or special populations.

### **Educational Resources Strategy – Including Public Information, Signage, Education and Interpretation**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

All alternative presented are intended to improve the educational outreach and information sharing with the community. Providing outreach materials in Spanish will benefit the local Spanish speaking community in the Coachella Valley. The strategies presented here would be applied to all segments of the human population and would not disproportionately adversely impact minorities, children, or special populations.

### **Management of Scientific Resources**

#### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

The Preferred plan presented is intended to improve the understanding of science-related factors within the National Monument and sharing scientific advances with the community. The strategies presented here would be applied to all segments of the human population and would not disproportionately adversely impact minorities, children, or special populations.

### **Management of Visitation, Facilities and Uses – Access**

**Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)**

The Preferred plan presented is intended to improve access to land within the National Monument. Increasing access would benefit the entire human population. The strategies presented here would be applied to all segments of the human population and would not disproportionately adversely impact minorities, children, or special populations.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Private Property Concerns**

**Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)**

The Preferred plan would increase communication between BLM and Forest Service and all members of the community. This would not adversely impact any segment of the human population and would pose no health threats to children.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Facility Development**

**Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)**

The preferred plan is intended to establish criteria for use when facilities are identified as being needed throughout the National Monument. This benefits all segments of the population by suggesting that already disturbed sites be a priority for facility development. Under all alternatives facility development would be compliant with the American Disabilities Act, benefiting all segments of the human population. This would result in less disturbance to public land, a benefit to all segments of the population. No alternative proposed would adversely impact any segment of the population and no health threats to children would be anticipated.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Visitor Use with Regard to Hwy 74**

**Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)**

The preferred plan would benefit all segments of the human population equally as it would result in better coordination between Caltrans, Forest Service, and BLM regarding increased visitor use on Highway 74. This would pose no health threats to children and would not disproportionately impact minorities or special populations.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Monitoring Visitor Use**

**Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)**

Monitoring visitor use would result in baseline information regarding the existing use of the Federal lands within the v. This information would benefit all segments of the human population, as it would assist BLM and Forest Service in managing the land for all user groups. None of the alternatives presented here would disproportionately impact minorities, children, or special populations.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Hazards to Facility, Visitor and Public Safety**

**Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)**

The preferred plan would benefit all segments of the human population because it would improve the efficiency with which hazards and public safety were managed on Federal land within the National Monument. None of the alternatives presented here would disproportionately impact minorities, children, or special populations.

**Management of Visitation, Facilities, and Uses – Fire Plan**

**Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)**

The preferred plan would promote coordination of fire management within the National Monument between all agencies with fire management authority. This would be

beneficial to all segments of the human population, as it would improve the efficacy with which fire-related information is shared among fire-management agencies within the bounds of the National Monument. No adverse impacts would be anticipated to minorities, children or special populations.

#### **Water Resources - Surface and Ground Water Resources**

##### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

Identifying the quality of groundwater and surface water located on Federal lands within the National Monument would benefit all segments of the human population. None of the alternatives presented here would disproportionately impact minorities, children, or special populations.

#### **Acquisition Strategy - Acquisition Criteria**

##### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

None of the alternatives presented here would disproportionately impact minorities, children, or special populations. The Preferred Plan and the No Action Alternative would assure that land is acquired from willing sellers only and that acquisitions are conducted in coordination with local jurisdictions

#### **Adaptive Management and Monitoring Program – Implementing the Plan**

##### Preferred Plan (Alternative A, B, and C) and No Action (D)

None of the alternatives presented here would disproportionately impact minorities, children, or special populations. The Preferred Plan is intended to provide the most effective and efficient means to implementing the actions proposed. This would benefit all segments of the human population.

#### **4.B.16. Hazardous Materials**

The management of hazardous materials within the National Monument is coordinated between County and local representatives and BLM and Forest Service. The management of unwanted vegetation by using herbicides is not expected to have significant impacts on the National Monument because such use will be limited in scope and subject to Best Management Practices. The preferred plan to prohibit paintball would benefit hazardous material management in the National Monument because fewer leftover paintball accessories would contribute to potential hazardous material sites and the presence of leftover paint and associated articles would not require assessment by hazardous material specialists. Inventory of abandoned mines within the National Monument would benefit management of hazardous materials because an inventory would identify potential sites in need of management action.

#### **Recreation Resources - Recreational Shooting**

The preferred plan (Alternative C) to prohibit recreational shooting within Federal lands within the National Monument that are outside of the State Game Refuge where such shooting is already disallowed would benefit management of hazardous materials in the National Monument because spent bullets and shells would be reduced in number, thereby limiting potential hazardous material sites in the future. The No Action Alternative and Alternatives B and C may lead to increased trash dumping and the accumulation of lead (from shell casings) in the environment. Alternative A would result in lead from shell casings being concentrated in one area. Continued shooting resulting from hunting would continue to provide minimal contributions to hazardous materials within the National Monument.



#### **4.C Additional Impacts**

##### **Long Term Productivity and Commitments of Resources**

This National Monument Management Plan provides a number of strategies for coordination among partnering agencies as well as specific management direction regarding a small scope of recreational uses. Because the focus of this Management Plan is the protection and preservation of National Monument resources and limited recreational use, there will be no impacts to long-term productivity of resources from the proposed actions. In fact, actions proposed here would benefit long term productivity of resources by outlining methods for more effectively managing all resources with partner agencies. No irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources would result from the actions proposed through this Management Plan should they be implemented. Future projects within the National Monument with the potential to result in irretrievable commitments of resources would require site specific NEPA analysis including required surveys and impacts would be evaluated at that time.

##### **Cumulative Impacts**

Cumulative effects are those effects in a particular area which result from the incremental effects of a proposed action added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of which agency or person undertakes them (40 CFR 1508.7). The analysis and disclosure of cumulative effects are important because they alert decision makers and the public to the context within which effects are occurring, and to the environmental implications of the interaction of proposed actions with other known and likely actions within the planning area and the region. The scope of this cumulative impact analysis addresses the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains area, ranging from the desert floor (Coachella Valley portion of the California Desert Conservation Area Plan, as amended, and the adjoining desert environment) to the mountain areas (the San Jacinto Ranger District of the San Bernardino National Forest and adjoining mountain communities).

##### **Population and Tourism Growth and Impacts to Resources**

The National Monument consists of 271,400 acres located in highly populated southern California. San Bernardino and Riverside counties have a combined population of over 3 million people, all within a one-and-one-half-hour drive of the National Monument. The greater Los Angeles area has a population of over 9.7 million people, all within a two to three hour drive to the National Monument. Growth in the Coachella Valley, with city jurisdictions directly abutting and within the outer edges of the National Monument is expected to nearly double from its current population of 316,000 to 600,000 residents over the next 20 years.

The population increase in southern California has been accompanied by a growth in tourism. As the number one travel destination in the United States, California annually generates more than \$75 billion in direct travel spending into the economy, directly supports jobs for more than 1 million Californians and generates \$5 billion in direct state and local tax revenue. Tourism is California's 3<sup>rd</sup> largest employer and 5th largest contributor to the gross state product. The Coachella Valley alone experienced 3.5 million visitors, with 41% being from California, the average stay being 5.7 nights, and the average amount spent being \$254 (Palm Springs Desert and Resort Convention and Visitor Authority, 2002). With a long history of providing a destination for southern Californians, the community of Idyllwild, just outside the National Monument boundary

caters to tourists with a number of Festivals gaining in popularity and increasing numbers of Inns and cabins available for lodging.

An extrapolation of data from various access points in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains provide an estimate of approximately 2.3 million visitors and pass through commuters (via State Highway 74) annually. In recent years, more than 90,000 visitors annually experienced the relative solitude of the Indian Canyons area managed by the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians and the Aerial Tramway hosts about 375,000 paid riders each year. Various other commercial and non-commercial activities have also increased access to more remote areas within the National Monument.

Growth of the residential population and growth in the tourism industry have increased the awareness of and need for outdoor recreation opportunities and open space within the National Monument and nearby areas. BLM and Forest Service lands are becoming increasingly important to the public as a source of recreational opportunities, open space, and habitat for threatened and endangered species. Southern California and the southwest urban populations are continuing to grow, placing pressure on the open spaces that are remaining. With the increased population has come an increase in our understanding of the impacts of habitat fragmentation and high use levels on resources. Impacts to National Monument resources from current levels of use are unknown. Initiating standardized monitoring methods involving partner agencies will add to our understanding of current and future conditions.

Federal, Tribal, State, County, city, or private conservation organizations manage approximately 231,000 acres of the 271,400 acre National Monument. BLM and Forest Service managed lands within the National Monument boundary have existing land use designations for the protection of natural and cultural resources. Lands managed by Agua Caliente, California Department of Fish and Game, California Department of Parks and Recreation, the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy, and the University of California Reserve System also manage their lands while considering the protection of resources.

Access into the mountains is severely limited by topography and lack of roads. Other than state highway access, there are only a few roads providing access into the National Monument. This limitation has resulted in large blocks of habitat in the interior areas of the Mountains being protected and conserved from urbanization and agricultural development. Where the valley and mountains meet, thousands of acres of habitat have been converted to agriculture and urbanized areas. Hiking trails have been constructed from the valley into the mountains, some purposefully and others that simply evolved over time through use.

BLM, the Forest Service, California Department of Fish and Game, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, and local jurisdictions and conservation organizations have worked to protect and conserve wildlife habitat in the National Monument through interagency planning efforts, the establishment of the Santa Rosa Wildlife Management Area and Game Refuge, the Santa Rosa Wilderness, San Jacinto Wilderness and the National Monument itself (See Chapter 3, History and Setting). These designations each come with prescriptions for use and requirements for protecting the natural, biological, and scenic resources of the Monument. The BLM issued a Record of Decision in December 2002, on the California Desert Conservation Area Plan Amendment for the Coachella Valley. This plan contains stringent protective

measures for BLM-managed lands within the National Monument, providing habitat conservation objectives for ten threatened and endangered plants and animals and the habitats that sustain them. Land to the south of the Monument boundary is managed by Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, the largest park in the California State Parks system, and managed to protect sensitive desert resources.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service estimates that nearly 20,000 acres of suitable bighorn sheep habitat within the range of three ewe groups that occur along the urban interface between Palm Springs and La Quinta has been lost to urbanization and agriculture (USFWS 2000). This habitat loss has resulted in traditional movement corridors being eliminated, foraging areas reduced, and access to watering areas lost. In addition, as the human population in the Coachella Valley has grown, the number of people using hiking trails that bisect sheep habitat has increased as well. During the lambing season and hot summer season, human intrusion in the mountains may negatively impact ewes with lambs and access to water, respectively. Bighorn sheep are especially vulnerable to disturbance of people hiking with dogs, a popular activity in the mountains. Sheep interact with humans in other ways, entering the urban interface along the edge of the mountains for food and water, drowning in swimming pools, ingesting poisonous plants, and becoming entangled in fences. Other disturbances to bighorn sheep include private plane and helicopter overflights, capture and handling by state agencies and researchers permitted by California Department of Fish and Game, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Bureau of Land Management, and radio-tracking of bighorn sheep by researchers. There are many other factors that have significantly impacted bighorn in the Monument including disease, predation, and accidental death.

The BLM, CDFG, USFWS, the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, and local jurisdictions and conservation organizations are taking measures to reduce disturbance to sheep. The BLM's recent CDCA Plan Amendment for the Coachella Valley (2002) includes management prescriptions BLM-managed lands within the National Monument intended to promote recovery of bighorn sheep in the Peninsular Ranges (Appendix F). These management prescriptions were developed based in part on recommendations in the Recovery Plan, as well as peer-reviewed scientific literature, ecological studies of bighorn sheep, and interviews with bighorn biologists and managers throughout the western United States. The CDFG has designated three ecological reserves within the Santa Rosa Mountains and regulate access and permissible activities to protect bighorn sheep. The Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians recently completed a Tribal Habitat Conservation Plan that contains measures to protect bighorn sheep as well.

Implementation of the CDCA Plan Amendment for the Coachella Valley will benefit bighorn sheep by (1) restoring and managing habitat to promote bighorn sheep recovery; (2) managing land uses to avoid, reduce, or mitigate disturbance; (3) manage bighorn sheep populations to promote recovery. In addition to BLM planning actions, there is a multiple jurisdiction planning effort underway, the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Communities Conservation Plan (HCP). This multi-jurisdictional plan, if adopted, would provide management guidance and protection for sensitive species that occur within the Monument, including Peninsular Ranges bighorn sheep, desert slender salamander, Coachella Valley milkvetch and others. This plan would also outline monitoring efforts, population dynamics and changes that would trigger re-evaluation of current management practices, and use levels. The Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians has recently completed a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) for tribal lands within the National Monument. This HCP

provides management and conservation guidance to the Tribe with the intent to result in conservation for sensitive species that occur on or around Tribal land.

Implementation of these land use plans, habitat conservation plans, and the Monument Plan, collectively, will result in benefits to biological resources within the National Monument. The development of the National Monument Management Plan in coordination with the Monument Advisory Committee and local jurisdictions and agencies, using common scientific information and linked planning processes, should help ensure well-considered public decisions designed to deliver improved public service to visitors to the National Monument as well as improved management of natural, social, economic and cultural values intended.

The public and private land decisions, in a growing area like southern California and the local mountain communities with complex land ownerships and jurisdictions, are inherently interdependent. Delivering coordinated decisions at the landscape level is consistent with addressing (1) community development and quality of life concerns, and (2) a long-term framework for species and habitat conservation. Further benefits would also accrue, including increased levels of pride and local “ownership” of the National Monument, increased levels of local jurisdiction involvement in coordinated management, a better understanding of the national qualities of the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains, and increased effectiveness by coordinating with partner agencies in the protection of all the National Monument values.

Establishing a coordinated framework to support local communities and provide for long-term conservation within the mountains increases opportunities to deliver the intended public benefits and improved public service. The use of best available science would continue to aide in the successful implementation of the National Monument Management Plan as well as other plans being developed by partner jurisdictions. Continuing to include stakeholders in the management process (volunteers, site steward program, etc.) will provide the key to effective implementation.

Urban development along the valley-mountain interface is anticipated to continue into the foreseeable future. That development will likely include areas that are designated critical habitat for bighorn sheep and other sensitive areas. Increased visitation is likely to continue in the foreseeable future as residents and visitors continue to seek out open space and outdoor recreation activities. Trail use prescriptions within the National Monument are being developed in the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan and will address increasing number of visitors to sensitive habitats. Additionally, the monitoring plan being developed for the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan includes mechanisms for evaluating changes in human use levels and provides for adaptive management when needed.

Uncertainty exists regarding past and current numbers of visitors to Federal lands within the National Monument. Proposed methods for monitoring visitor numbers will aid in future adaptive management. Previous studies researching the impact of the designation of a National Monument or other congressionally designated areas on visitation by locals and by tourists have provided mixed results. Media attention, rather than the designation, could influence visitation more so than the designation (McCool, 1985). As the Interpretive Program of the National Monument grows, visitation is likely to increase to those areas highlighted through interpretive programs.

Over half of the Federal land in the National Monument that is currently designated as Wilderness will continue to be managed consistent with the Wilderness Act, with opportunities for solitude continuing to be a priority. Higher levels of visitation to wilderness will need to be managed to maintain levels of solitude that are acceptable to the public.